

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

May 30, 1978

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Speaker:

It is my honor to transmit herewith to the Congress a report of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission. The Commission believes that this report adequately and accurately presents the historical justification for the site selected and clearly depicts the nuances and many attractions of the proposed memorial design. The design has received the approval of all the necessary governmental agencies, including the Commission of Fine Arts, the National Capital Planning Commission, and the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior.

It is the hope of the Commission that the Congress will act favorably on a resolution authorizing the construction of the memorial and the necessary funds to defray its cost of construction. The Memorial Commission will be grateful for the continued cooperation of the Congress.

I have the honor to remain,

Respectfully yours,

*Eugene J. Keogh*

The President  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C. 20510

The Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D. C. 20515

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT  
MEMORIAL COMMISSION

CO

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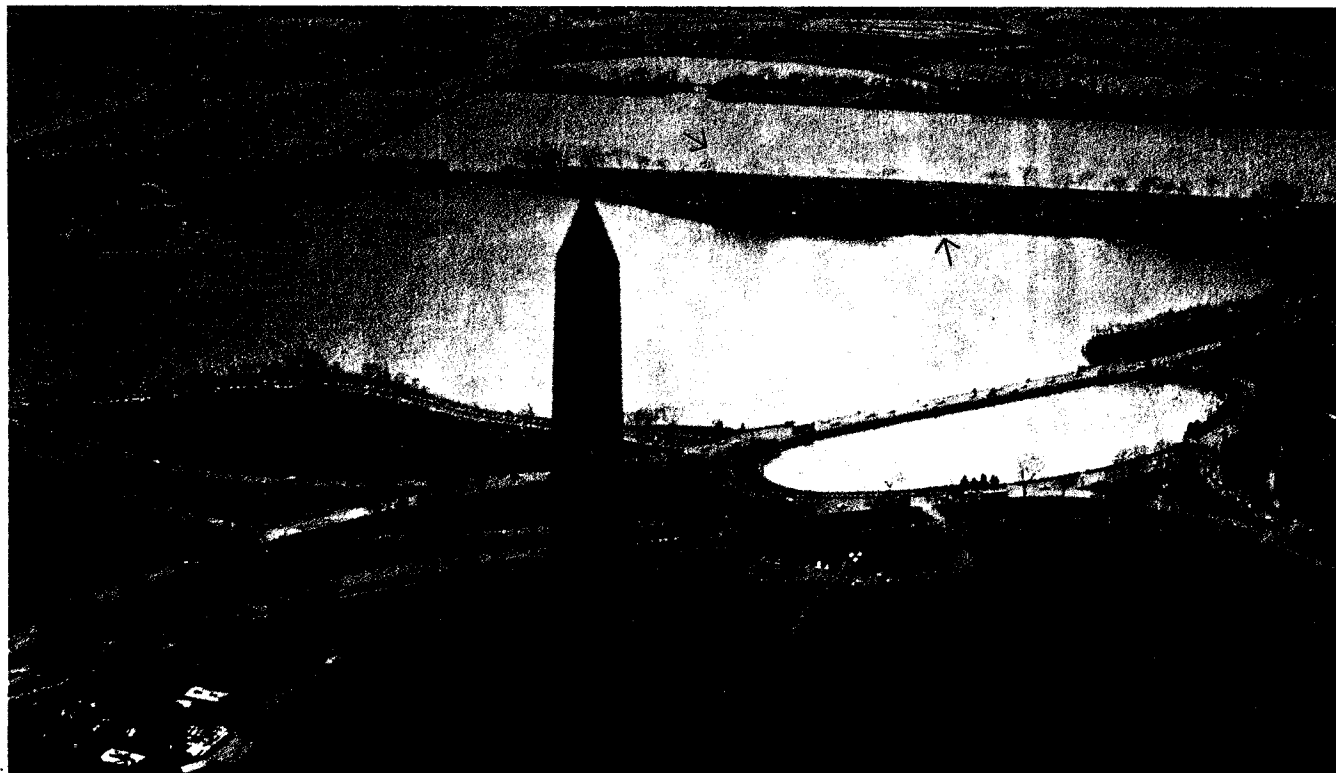
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\*Presidential Appointment

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1. View of Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial site across the Tidal Basin. Washington Monument in foreground, Jefferson Memorial to the left. The Potomac flows beyond the site.

## I THE FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL COMMISSION

In the spring of 1978, the design for the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial had received the final approval of all responsible and involved agencies. Thus, after over 18 years, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission, aided by the offices and counsel of the Commission of Fine Arts, the National Capitol Planning Commission, and the National Park Service, concluded a major part of its Congressional charge to consider and formulate plans for the design and construction of a memorial to the 32nd President of the United States.

This report places the Memorial within its historic context, explains the relationship of the Memorial to the site, examines the major influences which helped shape its form, describes the visitor's experience of the Memorial, and discusses the constituent elements of the design.

Located on the Tidal Basin along the Cherry Walk between the Lincoln and Jefferson Monuments, the Memorial design creates a park-like setting in which the visitor is encouraged to participate in and experience many of the aspects of the life and times of one of the major presidents this nation has chosen to memorialize, Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

### BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

In 1946, World War II having ended, a Congressional resolution was introduced to establish a commission that would oversee the creation of a memorial to Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Nine years later, on August 11, 1955, Public Law 372 of the 84th Congress was approved, and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission was formally established, "... for the purpose of considering and formulating plans for the design, construction and location of a permanent memorial to Franklin Delano Roosevelt in the city of Washington. . . ."

The Memorial Commission appointed a distinguished advisory panel of experts to guide it in the selection of a site appropriate for the Memorial, to consider the form the Memorial should take and the methods of selecting those who would design it. This Advisory Committee consisted of four architects and planners, a landscape architect, and two recognized critics of physical and visual design.<sup>1</sup>

The Advisory Committee, after many meetings and visits to a number of possible sites visited by the Memorial

Commission, came to a conclusion. It recommended that the form of the memorial not be predetermined; that an architectural competition be held to select the design and theme of the Memorial; and that the most suitable site was an area in West Potomac Park between the Potomac River and the Tidal Basin. Adoption of these recommendations were transmitted to the Congress, and the present 66-acre site was set aside on recommendation of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Commission by a Joint Congressional Resolution on September 1, 1959. The Resolution stipulated that the land area for the Memorial not exceed "... twenty-seven acres more or less. ...". The Resolution further authorized the Memorial Commission to hold a competition for the design of the Memorial.

In its report to the Memorial Commission, the Advisory Committee recommended "... that an individual of recognized professional ability and standing be appointed ... to prepare a clear program, draw up appropriate rules of procedure, and generally organize and administer the execution of the Competition." Edmund Bacon, then the Executive Director of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, was selected for this post and, for his conduct of the competition, received national praise. The Jury selected to judge the results consisted of three architects, a landscape architect, and a gallery director, all universally respected professionals of impeccable credentials.<sup>2</sup>

The history of the events subsequent to the 1960 competition has been more than amply documented in *The Architecture of Monuments* by Thomas H. Creighton, and will only be briefly discussed here. We propose to sketch the contours of the Memorial Commission's activities and to trace the evolution of attitudes that have shaped the present design.

In the booklet accompanying invitation to the 1960 competition, the Memorial Commission established the basic framework for all future attempts to design the Memorial:

"... it became evident that the most important thing in creating a suitable memorial ... is the discovery of a theme that will bring forth ... the fullest kind of response. ... We must look rather to the character and work of Franklin Delano Roosevelt to give us the theme of a memorial that will do him the honor he deserves and transmit his image to future generations."

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The Commission established a number of other important points, three of which seem most germane to the present design:

1. "That the memorial enhance the value of the surrounding park lands and not compromise such existing amenities as the Cherry Walk."
2. "That it serve both residents of the nation and the National Capitol," and finally,
3. "That the memorial design be in harmony with the existing Jefferson, Lincoln, and Washington monuments."

The Commission further indicated that West Potomac Park was selected as the site because:

... it suggests a more reflective expression and because of its location, a less dominant form than the Lincoln, Jefferson and Washington Monuments. This need not mean that the design be of lesser quality. It will have its own quality, which should balance the other three memorials, and complete them. . . .

The winning Pederson and Tilney design of the 1960 competition was a powerful, vertical architectural composition of huge steles. The design generated a substantial amount of informed critical debate among the nation's design arbiters. This thoughtful critical appraisal and a great deal of reasoned testimony guided the Memorial Commission's deliberations, and in January 1962, with one dissenting vote, the Memorial Commission gave its approval to the winning design. The Federal Commission of Fine Arts, whose approval was also necessary, after due and considered deliberation rejected the design.

Following the rejection of the first design, the Memorial Commission took further steps to carry out its charge as described in Public Law 372. In 1966, fifty-five architects were contacted by letter inquiring as to their interest in participating in the project. After extensive review the Memorial Commission selected the distinguished architect Marcel Breuer in June of that year. On December 20, 1966, the Breuer design was presented to the Memorial Commission. It was composed of seven imposing rough granite "darts," 60 feet at their highest, radiating outward from a 32-foot cube of polished granite bearing an incised photographic portrait of Roosevelt on its surfaces.

The Commission of Fine Arts, meeting on January 26, 1967, voted to abandon the design.

In 1970, the Memorial Commission endorsed the idea of a rose garden, an idea for the memorial which had never been completely explored.

In 1972, the 1955 joint resolution establishing the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission was amended by Public Law 92-332, "... the Secretary of the Interior is authorized, upon the request of the Commission to participate in the planning and design of the memorial." In March 1974, the Memorial Commission requested that seven nationally recognized landscape architects and architects prepare and submit design concepts responsive to several new criteria which indicated the Commission's slightly altered attitude towards the memorial design.

The criteria at that time established that the Memorial should contain a water feature as a focal point as well as "a statue, bas-relief, head, or some suitable sculpture of the former President," and that there should be no major intrusive structure "... to detract from a contemplative memorial atmosphere."

Thus, after years, the groundwork for a landscaped Memorial park, rather than a monumental architectural solution, had slowly evolved. A new and different kind of memorial had to be developed reflective of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidency, and it had taken over a decade to determine what that response should be, over a decade to leave notions of structural monumentality behind and arrive at an appropriate memorial gesture.

The seven designers submitted their proposals, and after interviews and assessment, the Memorial Commission and National Park Service selected the internationally noted landscape architect Lawrence Halprin of San Francisco as the designer of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. The following year, 1975, the basic design concept for the memorial was approved by the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission, the Federal Commission of Fine Arts, and the National Capitol Planning Commission. Since then, at each step of the way in the development of the memorial, the design has been scrutinized by all appropriate agencies, and in March 1978 the design of the Memorial received final design approval from the Memorial Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts.

## II THE GUIDELINES

The actions of the various responsible commissions and professional and public responses indicate that virtually every avenue was explored to find an approach to the Memorial appropriate to the man, the site, and the times. Indeed, in the ensuing 18 years since the initial competition, the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial has been instrumental in causing a universal reappraisal of the whole nature of memorials. That time period and reappraisal have also enabled the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission to refine its own considerations on the nature of this Memorial and address them to the designer, Lawrence Halprin. These considerations or guidelines, although brief, have since guided the course of the design.

The guidelines were:

1. That the landscape solution harmonize with the beauty of the existing park-like setting.
2. That waterplay be a significant element of the memorial environment.
3. That no major structure dominate the site.
4. That an image, or images of Roosevelt are appropriate.
5. That the recreational area be retained.

Since 1960, including and subsequent to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial competition, there have been over 500 attempts to arrive at a design appropriate to President Roosevelt and to the site. These designs have ranged from architectonic and monumental gestures to "soft" landscape solutions covering much of the site. Some designers, in fact, engulfed the entire 66-acre site, while others proposed structures which dwarfed or severely competed in scale with the existing monuments and memorials within the Mall precincts. The winner of the first competition was in this latter category and was rejected by reviewing bodies partially on the basis of its physical and visual intrusion into the landscape between the Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials and the Washington Monument. Other designs occupying almost the entire site would have caused the loss of a major portion of the existing recreational area, a necessary and well used amenity for the city of Washington.

A later concept of a simple rose garden was found to be lacking the sufficient strength to convey to the future the memory of the man considered by so many to have been one of the four great presidents of the United States.

While the guidelines were explicit, it was clear the assignment itself was both generous and challenging. The Memorial was to be a living, friendly, changing, contemplative place for people on one of the finest and most beautiful urban sites in the United States. The result is a creative and timeless response to Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his presidency.

The planning and design of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, while a brilliant response to that President and to the guidelines, also took place within a broader historical context: an historical context of planning, which over a period of almost two hundred years determined the shape of Washington, D.C., established the site of the Memorial and created certain exterior physical relationships to which the Memorial responds positively.



### III THE FEDERAL CITY—HISTORICAL PLANNING

The Continental Congress sat mainly in Philadelphia during the War of Independence, but for a two-year period the embryonic government moved, due to military reversals, to Baltimore, Lancaster and York before returning again to Philadelphia. Peace in 1783 did not cease the wanderings. From Philadelphia the Congress moved to Princeton, Annapolis, Trenton and finally New York, where it met until it was succeeded by the first new Congress under the Constitution. Prospects for a permanent home were elusive. Dozens of sites were offered, but factionalism and regionalism inhibited decision. Southern states were reluctant to agree to a northern location, and Northerners were unwilling to leave the centers of New York, Boston, or Philadelphia for a location in the agricultural south.

The First Constitutional Congress met in 1789, and the debate over the location of the Federal City reopened with Northern delegates favoring a site at Wright's Ferry, Pennsylvania, and Southerners one at Georgetown on the Potomac, not far, coincidentally, from the homes of Thomas Jefferson and George Washington. In 1790 the debate was rejoined and a compromise was reached.



2. Thomas Jefferson's original sketch for the Federal City, 1791, showing the basic mall concept, the location of the president's house and capital, and the mud bank which became the site of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial.

Southern delegates, with Virginians Jefferson, Washington and Madison leading, agreed to support Alexander Hamilton's proposal for the federal government to assume the debts that the states had incurred financing the Revolutionary War, and New York delegates agreed, for that support, to a Southern location for the Federal City. That same year the Residence Act was passed, authorizing the President to select a site on the Potomac not to exceed ten square miles.

The selected site was to be surveyed, and "suitable buildings for the accommodation of Congress and of the President and for the public offices of the United States" were to be provided by the first Monday in December 1800. The capital would be located in Philadelphia during the decade of preparation.

In 1791, Andrew Ellicott, a professional surveyor, was employed to describe the bounds of the chosen district. He was joined in March of that year by Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant, a brilliant French volunteer who had become an American officer under Washington and who, as an artist and engineer, had won Washington's affection and admiration. On March 28, 1791, Washington reviewed the survey reports of the two in Georgetown, and on the last day of that month, effected an agreement with the property owners of the parcel selected and surveyed. Washington in a letter to Jefferson described the terms of the agreement which included among others that the size of the site be from " . . . three to five thousand acres and that when the whole shall be surveyed and laid off as a city (which Major L'Enfant is now directed to do), the present proprietors shall retain every other lot, and for such part of the land as may be taken for public use . . . they shall be allowed at the rate of twenty-five pounds per acre. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

L'Enfant was not the first to conceive the outlines of the eventual city on the Potomac. Thomas Jefferson did so before him. Jefferson's concept of a scheme for a capitol city must be pieced together from a marginal sketch on one of his letters, comments in various communications to Washington and L'Enfant, and his draft of a presidential proclamation. It can be concluded that Jefferson was acting as advisor to Washington in the matter of planning the city. In a note prepared to guide a discussion with Washington concerning the implementation of the Residence Act, he wrote,

"I should propose these (streets) to be at right angles as in Philadelphia, and that no street be narrower than 100 feet, with footways of 15 feet. Where a street is long and level, it might be 120 feet wide. I should prefer squares of at least 200 yards every way, which will be of about 8 acres each."

A draft for a presidential proclamation that concerned the appropriation of land for the capitol apparently included the map which has become known as the Jefferson Plan. A gridiron layout (as in Philadelphia) along the then existing Tyber Creek indicates sites for the Capitol, President's house, and public walks in the same relationship as the later L'Enfant plan. Also shown is a mud bank which almost a hundred years later would become the site of Potomac Park and still later the site of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial.

L'Enfant was instructed to proceed with a "Grand Plan" for the site. The terms of the appointment were probably not made clear by Washington; that L'Enfant was to be subordinate to the Commissioners of the Federal District, Daniel Carroll, Thomas Johnson and David Stuart. This misunderstanding, coupled with L'Enfant's headstrong ways, led to difficulties with the Commission and the Administration, embarrassing both. L'Enfant refused to make his drawings and notes available to Ellicott, who had been directed by Washington to produce an engraved map for public distribution to encourage land sales (L'Enfant having failed to do so himself). He was finally dismissed after a series of abrasive encounters on February 23, 1792, after accusing the Commissioners of incompetence, laxity, and favoritism and refusing to continue to work under their direction. Ellicott undertook to produce a plan for public distribution using L'Enfant's works in progress as modified by Jefferson, Washington and himself. The result was a reasonably accurate depiction of L'Enfant's final drawing.

L'Enfant's plan took as its influence France's Versailles, Chantilly and the Tuileries Gardens, masterworks of Andre LeNotre, as well as Frankfurt, Karlsruhe, Paris, Orleans, St. Petersburg, Milan and half a dozen other cities, plans of which Jefferson mentioned to Washington he had sent to L'Enfant at his request.

The plan was a Cartesian rectangular grid laid over the land. At key points L'Enfant had designated 15 major

squares, "... afterward opened some (diagonal streets) in different directions as avenues to contrast with the general regularity . . . but principally to connect each part of the city . . . by making the real distance less from place to place. . . ."<sup>5</sup>

The main feature of the plan was a public walk, the "Grand Avenue" (to become the Mall) 400 feet wide with gardens on both sides, leading from Jenkin's Hill (Capitol Hill) to the Potomac, where at the intersection with the north-south axis of the President's house was to be an equestrian statue commemorating President Washington. The President's house and the Congress House were connected by the city's most important diagonal avenue (Pennsylvania Avenue). The rest of the plan of the city complemented and emerged from this monumental right triangle. L'Enfant skillfully used all the tools of civic design available to him in his plan to create a designed urban environment not yet experienced on the new continent: regard for treating open spaces and building masses axially, the use of monuments and major public buildings to terminate vistas, and the use of broad diagonal avenues in an unselfconscious manner. These were familiar devices of an inherited Baroque attitude towards civic design of the day, and he used them all fluently and with maturity, creating the skeleton that anticipated the growth of the city and provided for it comfortably.

During the city's early years that growth, however, occurred so slowly that there was talk doubting the wisdom of the transfer of the government from Philadelphia. The city presented a rather sylvan vista to visitors from abroad and from home. Almost one-half of the city's land had been cleared of trees by 1795 and the rest

"... is in *woods*; and most of the streets which are laid out are cut through these woods; and have a much more pleasing effect now than I think they will have when they shall be built; for *now* they appear like broad avenues in a park, bounded on each side by thick woods; and there being so many of them, and proceeding in so many directions they have a certain wild, yet uniform and regular appearance. . . ."<sup>6</sup>

That was not, however, to remain for long. The first half of the 19th century saw the effects of the large-scale deforestation, and increased settlement profoundly affected the physical environment of the budding city. Siltation of

the Potomac and Anacostia River fronts began, and slowly the Potomac's littoral became an unhealthy, unsightly marsh. By 1834, Washington was slowly but steadily emerging from the wilderness. The Capitol was in place on Jenkin's Hill; the principal residential area grew to the north of Pennsylvania Avenue between it and the President's mansion, and large Navy yards constructed on the Anacostia River demonstrated not only a burgeoning economy but a burgeoning national confidence.

By the late 1840's, the Mall, having fallen into the domain of separate jurisdictions, was still unplanned and chaotic. William Corcoran suggested in 1850 to President Fillmore and to Joseph Henry, Secretary of the Smithsonian, that Andrew Jackson Downing, nationally regarded landscape gardener and designer, be retained to design the Mall grounds. Three objectives were established by Downing in the written portion of his plan: to provide a "natural style of landscape gardening," to form a "National Park," and to create a "public museum of living trees and shrubs."

His plan retained six separate public reservations, each with its own identity and connected by winding roadways and by the adjacent Tyber Canal (the creek had been made into a canal, a holdover from L'Enfant's scheme), which after fifty years of successive collapses of its banks remained mired with silt and refuse. Downing's plan was too ambitious for the nation's economy and upon his death in 1852 was abandoned, leaving only the Smithsonian grounds realized. The end of the Civil War and the re-establishment of the Union spurred Washington's growth. A burgeoning governmental bureaucracy provided, for the first time in the city's history, a real economic base.

By 1887 the Army Corps of Engineers had reclaimed some of the enormous area of marshy flats west of the Washington Monument that would almost double the length of the Mall. A published map shows the intent of piling fill upon a sand bar, creating what would later be called Potomac Park, enclosing the Tidal Basin. L'Enfant's plan had been severely compromised by the Congress a few years earlier when it gave approval for a railroad station to be built on the north side of the Mall with tracks running across it from the south. The changes and physical encroachments to the L'Enfant vision of the Mall made over the years were of such number and of such a chaotic nature and so

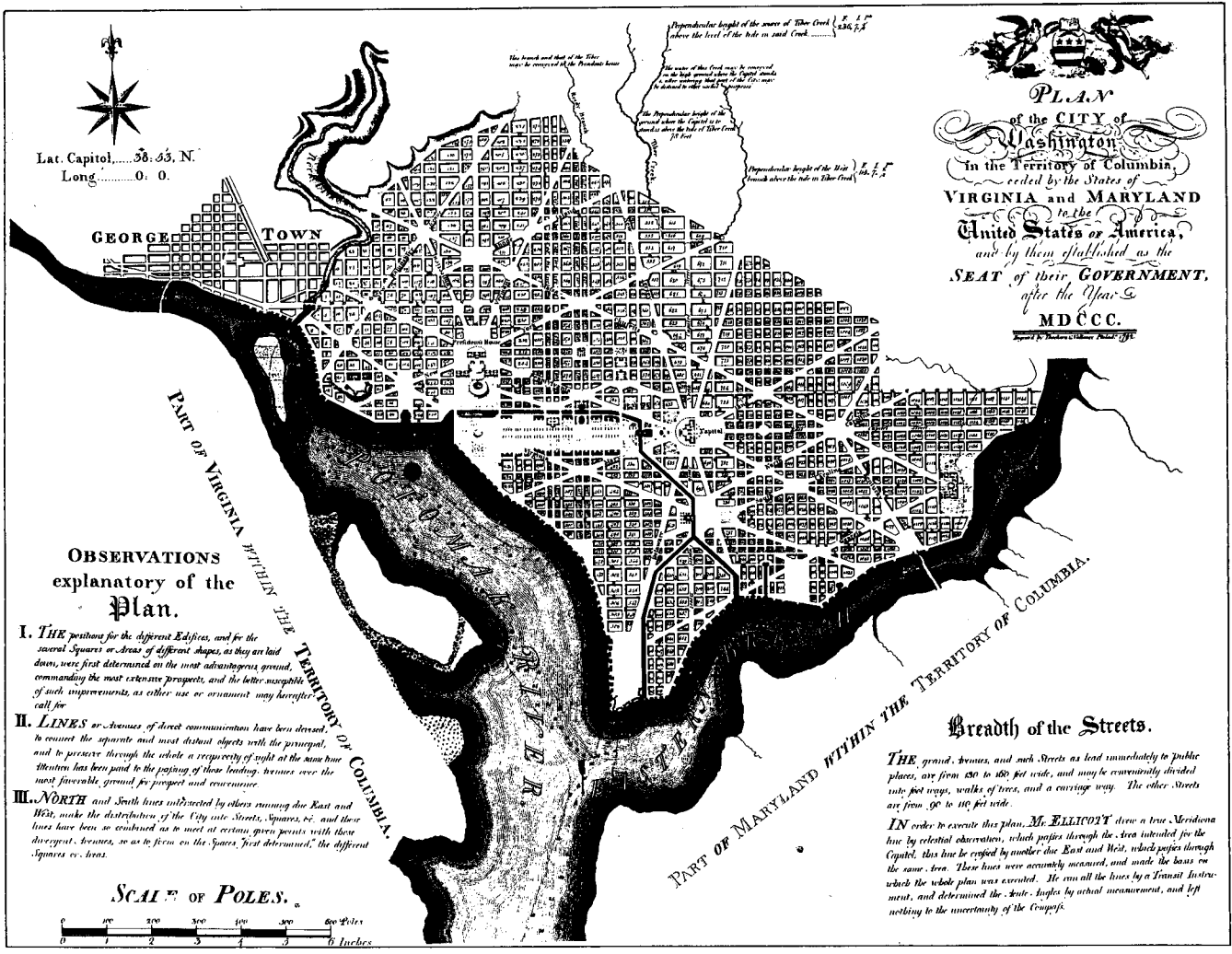
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3. The L'Enfant Plan for Washington D.C. drawn by Ellicott, 1792.

threatened the orderly conduct of commerce and government, that as the Centennial of the city neared, many thoughtful people began to consider appropriate ways to mark the occasion with a return to appropriate planning for the area.

December 1900, the threshold of a new century, was also the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the seat of the federal government in Washington, D.C., after its removal from Philadelphia. Congress, civic organizations and individuals, as well as municipal authorities, viewed the occasion as an opportunity, through celebration of the event, to somehow resurrect the physical grandeur of the city implied in the L'Enfant Plan.

The official commemoration opened on December 12, 1900, with suitable events held at the White House and on Capitol Hill. The celebrations underscored that this centennial would make its goal the physical improvement of the District of Columbia in a manner commensurate with the dignity and resources of the United States.

Glenn Brown, Historian of the Capital and Secretary of the American Institute of Architects, arranged for the Institute to hold its thirty-fourth annual meeting in Washington that year and called for its theme to be the beautification of the Capitol. Such nationally recognized designers as Frederick Law Olmsted, C. Howard Walker, H. K. Bush Brown and Cass Gilbert delivered papers at that meeting on such subjects as the Grouping of Public Buildings, Principles of Monumental Landscape Design, Sculpture in the National City, and other germane matters.

The area occupied by the principal public buildings, the "Great Right Triangle," received much of the attention of the participants, and a number of redevelopment plans for this portion of the city were drawn and offered for discussion. Of these, one drawn by Cass Gilbert of New York received most of the attention of the meeting. Anticipating many features of later plans, he treated the Mall as a single entity from the Capitol building to the Potomac. The most singular and brilliant, but subtle, architectural gesture was his slight tilting of the axis of the Mall from the Capitol to the Washington Monument to accommodate the deviation which occurred when the Washington Monument (for reasons of poor soil) was built off true axis. He correctly argued that given the distance between

the two, this tilt would not be noticed.

The proceedings of the Institute attracted interest and received the attention of those outside the architectural profession as well. Senator James McMillan of Michigan learned of these activities through his secretary, Dr. Charles Moore, who would go on to become Chairman of the future Commission of Fine Arts for some twenty years. Senator McMillan was Chairman of the Senate Committee on the District of Columbia and would become the political person about whom those concerned with the physical improvement of Washington would rally. In March 1901 his committee, after consultation with a select group from the American Institute of Architects, ordered the preparation of a general plan for the development of the park system for the District. A sub-committee called the Senate Park Commission was established in March 1901, with Charles Moore as its executive officer, and charged with the realization of the plan.

Initially the Senate Park Commission (it became known as the McMillan Commission) was composed of Daniel Burnham, architect, and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., landscape architect. They had been given authority to add to their numbers as they deemed appropriate and rapidly invited Charles F. McKim, architect, and later, Augustus St. Gaudens, sculptor. Three of the four had enormous experience in dealing with problems of physical growth at a metropolitan scale and had recently (1893) completed the world-renowned plan for the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

In June of 1901, with maps, drawings, photographs and what preliminary designs they had briefly prepared, Burnham, Olmsted, McKim and McMillan left for a tour of Europe (because of ill health, St. Gaudens did not accompany them). For seven weeks they visited Frankfurt, Berlin, Budapest, Rome, Venice, Paris and London, viewing parks, public buildings and boulevards, sketching and discussing a plan for Washington amidst the same examples of civic design that had inspired L'Enfant more than a century before.

It became clear than any replanning of the center of the city depended on some measure of restoration and redesign of L'Enfant's "Grand Avenue," which in the previous hundred years had been allowed to become a disorganized, incoherent open meadow with unplanned tree

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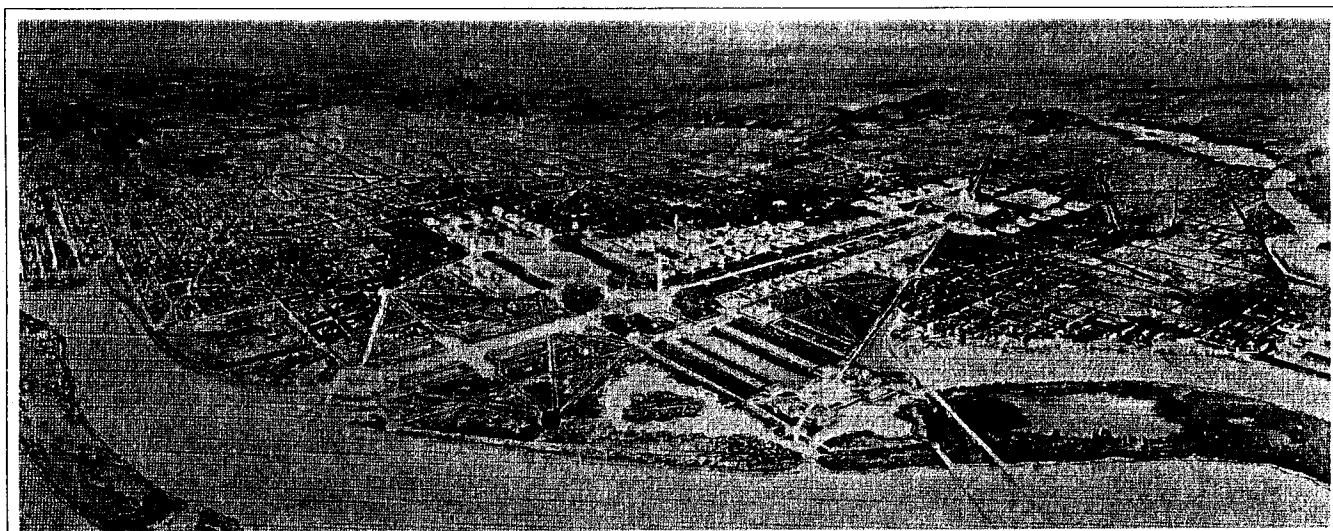
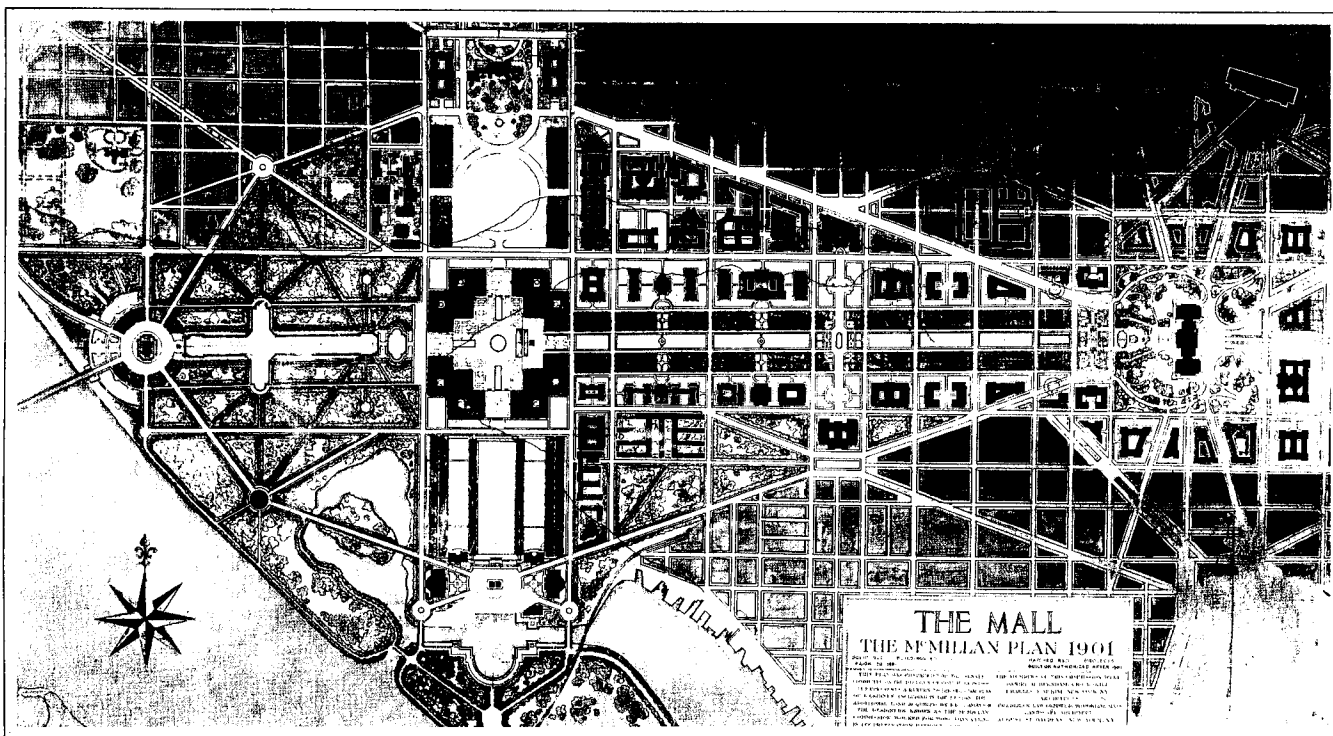
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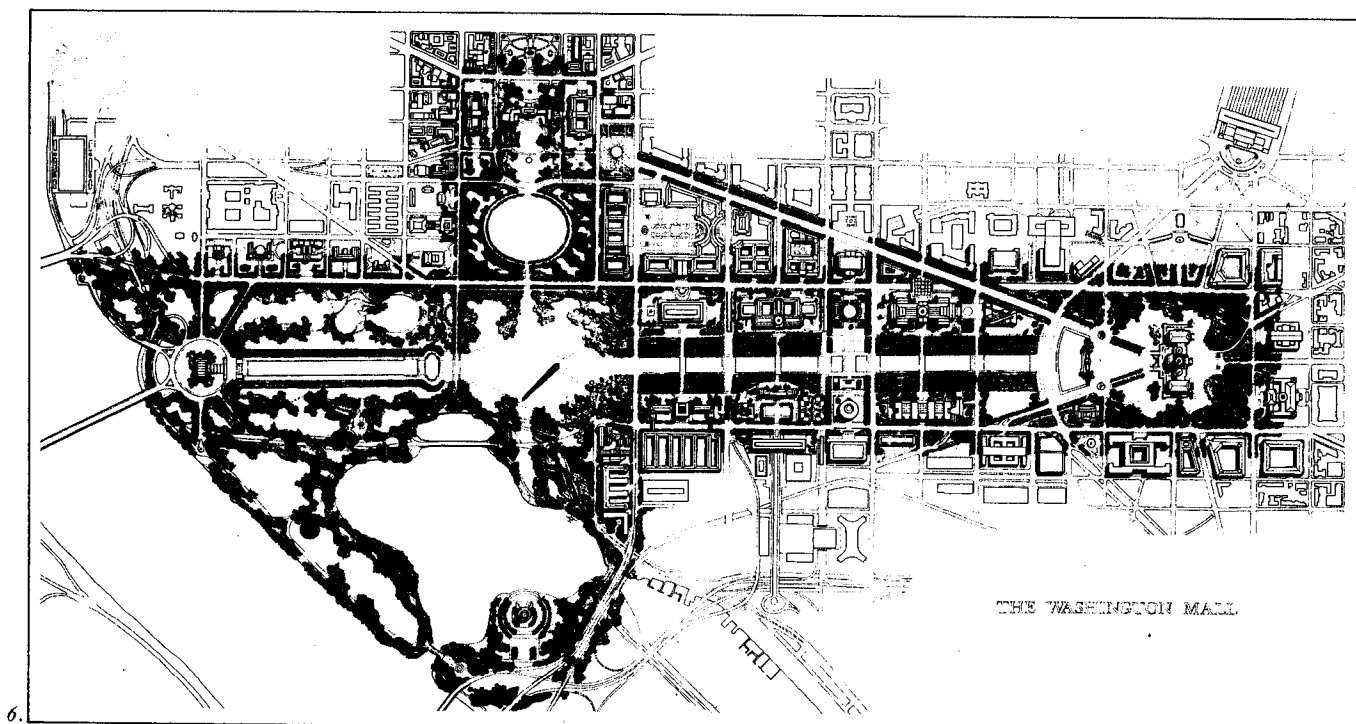
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4, 5. Plan and perspective of the McMillan Plan of 1901 which strengthened the geometry of the L'Enfant Plan and integrated the

fill area of the marshlands into a master plan. This plan has served as a guide to monumental Washington's development.



6. National Park Service Plan, 1974, based upon the 1966 Washington Mall Master Plan by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. This plan updates the basic McMillan Plan.

plantings, crisscrossed by curved walks going no place in particular and disfigured by the tracks and station of the Baltimore and Potomac Railway. While abroad, the Commission met with President Cassatt of the Pennsylvania Railroad (operators of the Baltimore and Potomac) and persuaded him to remove the station and tracks from the Mall to the site of the present Union Station. The new terminal would be designed to be large enough to handle all the passenger and freight for the growing capitol in the foreseeable future.

On August 1, 1901, the group returned from Europe and immediately established a design and drafting studio in

New York above the architectural offices of McKim, Mead and White. For the next five months, work on the plan proceeded vigorously. Burnham, Olmsted, and St. Gaudens were consulted and McMillan was frequently apprised of progress. Occasionally the entire Commission met for discussion and critique in the New York studio. Charles Follen McKim, with his own firm located just below, is generally credited as a major influence on the plan. Moore and Olmsted prepared the written portion of the plan which was approved in December, and on January 15, 1902, the proposals were made public, displayed for the first time at a gala event at the Corcoran Gallery. Almost two hundred drawings, photographs, and models

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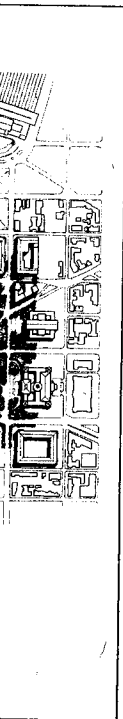
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captured the attention of the public and the press, as well as Secretaries John Hay and Elihu Root and President Theodore Roosevelt who "... interested, curious, at first critical and then, as the great consistent scheme dawned on him, highly appreciative."<sup>7</sup> Senators McMillan and Gallinger, and other members of the Senate Committee on the District of Columbia who received the guests had large reason to feel proud of the fruits of their labor.

The Grand Avenue was the key element of the Plan. As Cass Gilbert had suggested, the axis of the Mall was slightly tipped and the Washington Monument became once more the center of the realigned axis, recapturing that portion of L'Enfant's original concept and extending it to the bank of the Potomac. There, on reclaimed land, the Commission proposed the Lincoln Memorial as a terminus to this great civic axis.<sup>8,9</sup> The plan also established other great axial relationships to future major memorial sites. These axial relationships, direct outgrowths of L'Enfant's plan, create a geometric form of great clarity and strength. Brilliant as this new design was for treating the entire Mall, the extension of the Mall beyond the meeting point of the axis of the Capitol with that of the White House vitiated a great strength of L'Enfant's original plan.

"... it was L'Enfant's idea that the seminal source of the design for Washington would be the meeting of the city and the river, and that the design of the city would join the force of the region, the Potomac River, thus placing it in common with other great cities such as Venice, Florence, and Saint Petersburg. . . ."<sup>10</sup>

From the President's House, a long broad axial view down the Potomac was established. This view axis was crossed by one from the Capitol to the Virginia Hills across the foreground river. The meeting of these two axes created the site for a great open space (site of the monument to Washington) on the river, integrating both land and water into a superb powerful composition.

While the McMillan plan created a beautiful city, it did so at the expense of this aspect of L'Enfant's original vision. The McMillan plan produced a self-contained, inwardly oriented city which, it must be added, dealt intelligently and creatively with the land mass beyond the site of the Washington Monument that had begun to be added to the Mall some fifteen years before.

Much of the McMillan Commission's plan has been achieved and the Mall is considered by most observers of civic design to be an integral and worthy part of the nation's capital as well as a major success of urban organization. Much of the credit for this transformation and for the achievements of the last 70 years must go to two agencies which have, among others, monitored and managed its development.

The first, a direct outgrowth of the McMillan Commission, is the National Capital Planning Commission (formerly the National Capital Park and Planning Commission), which was established primarily to carry forward the 1902 plan and charged with making decisions about the Mall in the broader planning context of the city. The second is the Commission of Fine Arts, created in 1910 to insure design excellence in any development on the Mall.

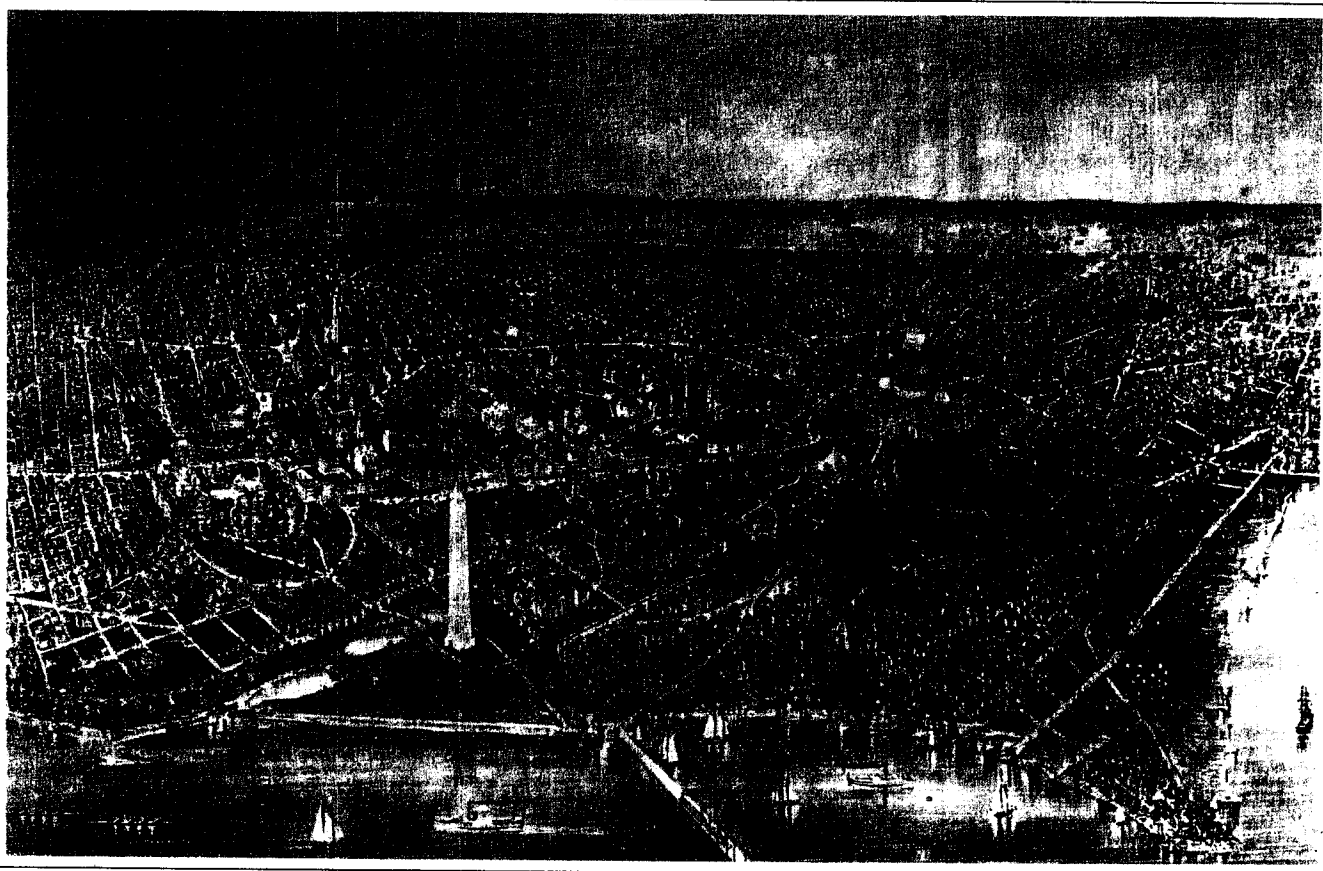
Burnham and Olmsted served on the first Commission which initially was responsible for advising on public sculptures in the capital. Its mandate was soon extended to include public buildings as well and, under the stewardship of Charles Moore until the 1930's, saw many of the recommendations of the McMillan Plan fulfilled.

The ultimate accolade for Charles Moore, Commission Chairman, came from the revered architect, William Adams Delano [family connection loosely noted] in an intimate memoir. . . . Delano wrote "... if one had to name the man most responsible for the development of our present capital it would be Charles Moore."<sup>11</sup>

The activities of these agencies in the period 1902-1975 have been legion. In West Potomac Park and around the Tidal Basin this period saw them undertake decisions to build the seawall and roads (1902-1906); to plant large numbers of trees, including 1,800 Japanese Cherry trees, the gift of the Japanese people in 1912; to construct the Lincoln Memorial (1914-1921); the reflecting pool (1922); the Ericsson Memorial (1916-1925); and the Jefferson Memorial (1934-1947). The most recent plan which consolidated these gains was the 1974 National Park Service Plan. Under the aegis of these agencies, West Potomac Park has grown into an extremely valuable resource for Washington residents and only a development representing an expansion of this resource would be regarded favorably by them. Major efforts have been made to improve the existing facilities.

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7. A Currier & Ives aerial sketch of Washington showing the site in the Potomac before filling.

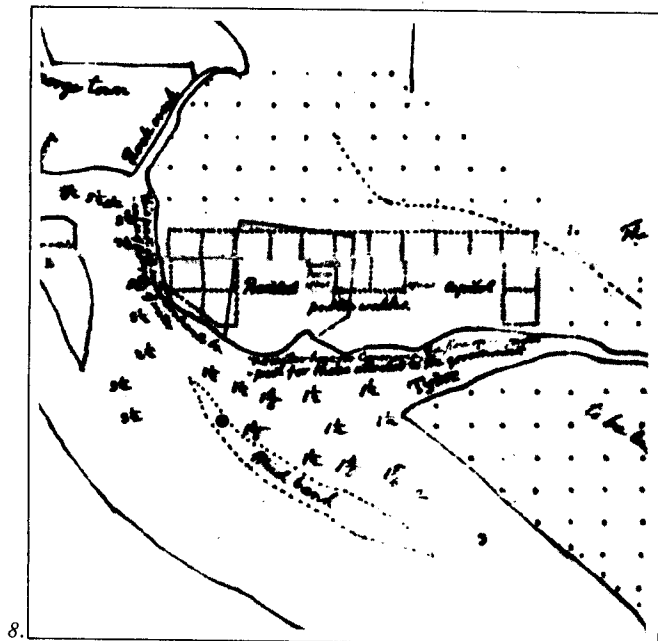


#### IV THE SITE

The earliest map of the location of the site appears on Thomas Jefferson's 1791 Sketch Plan for the Capitol City. It is drawn as a long narrow shape, opposite the mouth of Tyber Creek and is labeled "Mud bank." After the agony of the Civil War and the final determination of the fate of the Union, the commitment to Washington as the nation's capital was confronted by Congress. During the war, Washington had been used primarily as the seat of the Union government, and the results were apparent. Barracks were in place on the Mall and the Tyber Canal, envisioned by L'Enfant as a transportation artery and an aesthetic amenity, had become a noisome conduit for the city's sewage. Both the canal and mall terminated at the Potomac flats, the marshy riverfront area subject to periodic flooding. The proximity of the President's House to these unsightly and unhealthy mudflats occasioned frequent speculation about its possible relocation to higher, healthier ground somewhere in the countryside.

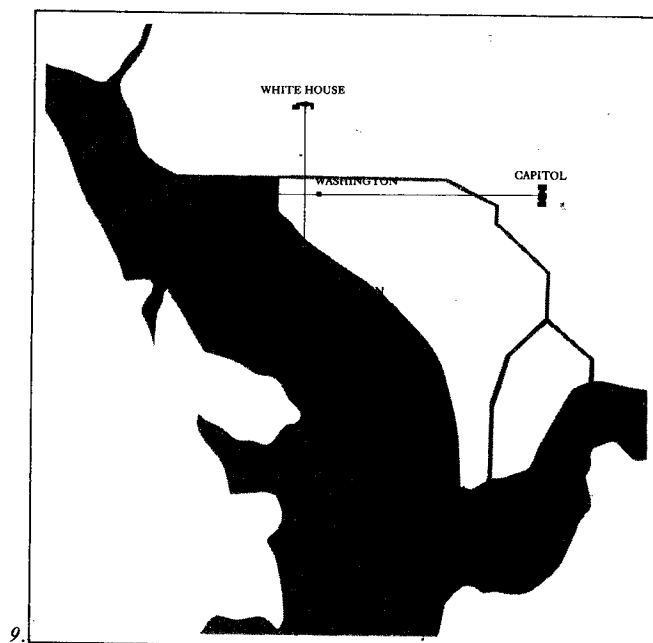
The commitment to improving the physical environment led to the establishment of the short-lived Board of Public Works. Board member Alexander Shepherd, a native Washingtonian, became one of the people who left a most positive stamp upon the city. Under his stewardship the Board directed efforts that covered the derelict canal and transformed it into a street. Covered sewers were constructed and streets were graded, paved and planted extensively with trees. Any development, such as markets, that had grown spontaneously contrary to L'Enfant's intentions were summarily removed and the open spaces returned to their intended purpose.

In 1867, responsibility for Washington's buildings and grounds was transferred from a municipal commission to the Army Corps of Engineers, a service body capable of undertaking necessary major, institutional works. The first engineer to assume responsibility was Nathaniel Michler, a hero of the Civil War. To his office were transferred all the records and documents of the municipal commissioner, including the manuscript of the L'Enfant Plan. Armed with these instruments and a personal vision, Michler set in motion those Corps activities that would eventually lead to the creation of Rock Creek Park, the unification of the Mall, and the long desired reclamation of the Potomac mudflats. During the period from 1874 to 1913, the Corps undertook and completed the difficult and lengthy task of reclaiming the marshy Potomac flats. In 1882 Congress granted the first appropriation to initiate



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*Progression showing formation of the Tidal Basin, the filling of the low marshlands in the Potomac and the development of the Memorial site as indicated by the red dot.*



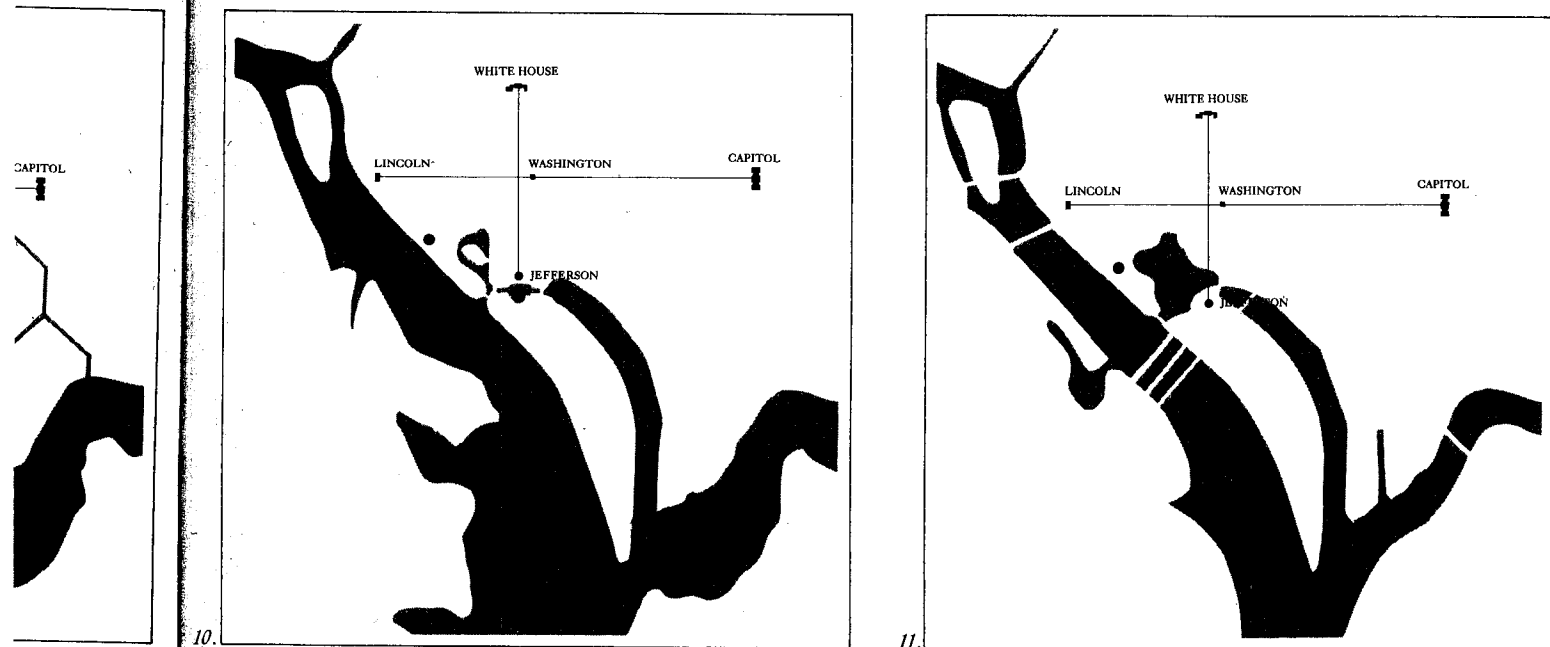
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*9. L'Enfant Plan 1792.*

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*8. Jefferson Plan 1791.*

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10. *McMillan Plan 1901.*

11. *Conditions in 1978.*

the reclamation project. Under the direction of a number of Army officers, the most notable being Peter Hains (for whom Hains Point is named), an enormous 600-acre piece of land was created. The project necessitated dredging the Potomac River navigational channel and dumping the spoil on the marsh area, raising it several feet above flood level.

Parallel to the old shoreline, and upon and beyond the limits of the mud bank, this enormous undertaking created what is now called East Potomac and West Potomac Park and doubled the length of the Mall. Between East and West Potomac Park the engineers created the winding shores of the functional and picturesque Tidal Basin. Utilizing a system of automatic gates which allow the Potomac waters to flow into the Basin at high tide and out again at low tide, the Washington Channel in the Potomac is daily flushed and cleared of refuse and debris.

Soon after its completion, West Potomac Park was extensively planted. The legacy of that planting remains,

primarily in the mature elms along Ohio and West Basin Drive, as well as the Cherry Walk, its famous trees a gift from Japan.

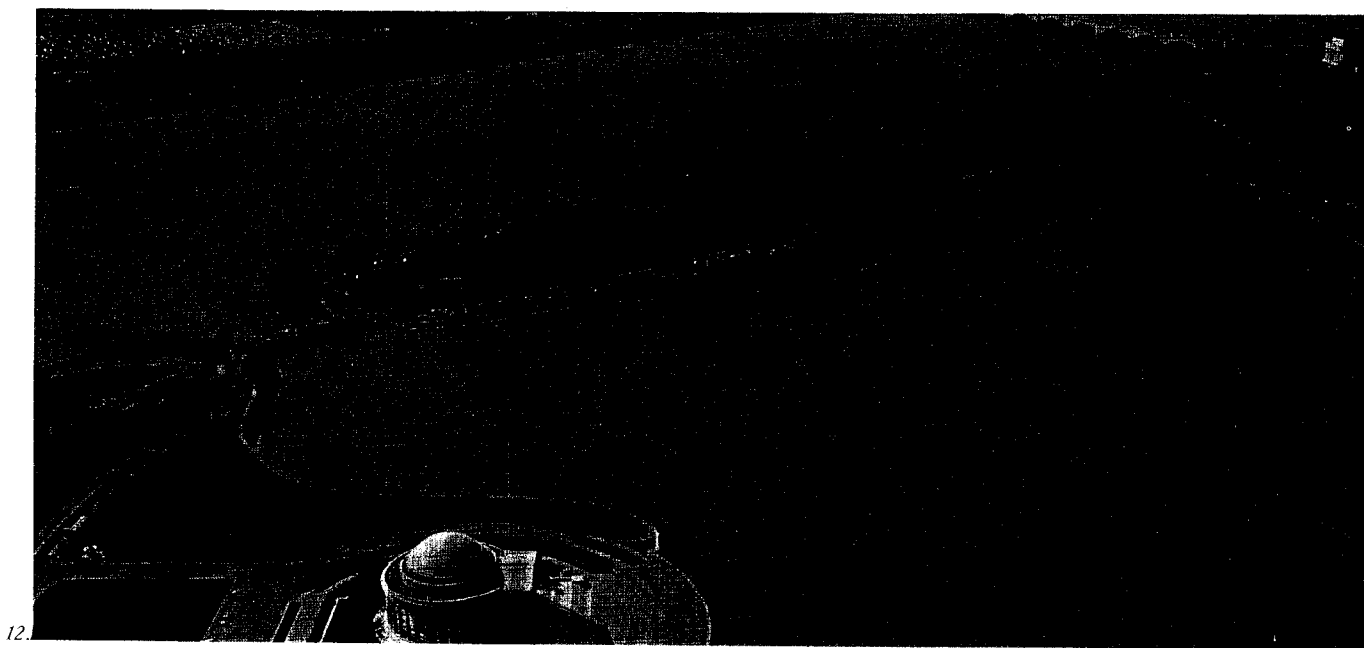
In the early 1960's, temporary buildings erected during World War II were removed and the area put to needed recreational use. This great open space provides an ideal location for the variety of existing active recreational activities needed by Washingtonians.

This site, wholly artificially created, is one of the most magnificent urban sites in the country and one of historic and symbolic significance.

Bounded by Independence Avenue and the Inlet Bridge and by the Potomac River and the Tidal Basin, it seems to embrace the city of Washington spatially. Anchored at both ends by the Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials, and focussed on the Washington Monument across the waters of the Tidal Basin, its appropriateness as a major memorial site is as clear today as it was when it was so designated by the McMillan Commission.

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12. Aerial view of the site between the Lincoln and the Jefferson Memorials.

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*13. The famous Cherry Walk in full bloom in April, Jefferson Memorial in the distance.*



*14. Washington Monument across the Tidal Basin.*

## V THE MEMORIAL DESIGN: INFLUENCES AND THE BASIC CONCEPT

Like many other works of civic design and architecture, the design of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial has significant precedent and many influences, of which the following four are most significant:

1. The geometry of the McMillan Plan;
2. The site;
3. Other historically significant environments and memorials from the past;
4. Franklin Delano Roosevelt himself: his life and times.

1. The most obvious, but by no means the most singular influence is the geometry of monumental Washington as developed by the McMillan Plan, often referred to as the "kite plan." That plan established three spots locating future memorial sites or plazas, two of which are now occupied by the Lincoln and Jefferson Monuments. The design of the Memorial recognizes and accepts the remaining vacant spot and further reinforces its locational importance by making it the entrance plaza for the entire Memorial. The plaza serves as a focus of entry for visitors as well as being the culmination of the 250-foot long Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial entry approach. The approach visually and axially aligns the visitor with the Washington Monument, seen in the distance across the broad reach of the Tidal Basin.

The Memorial, therefore, completes the great geometrical composition established by the 1901 plan, three of whose points contain the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, and the Jefferson Memorial. The symbolic importance and appropriateness of this location lie in Franklin Delano Roosevelt being honored as the fourth of our presidents to be formally and significantly remembered here.



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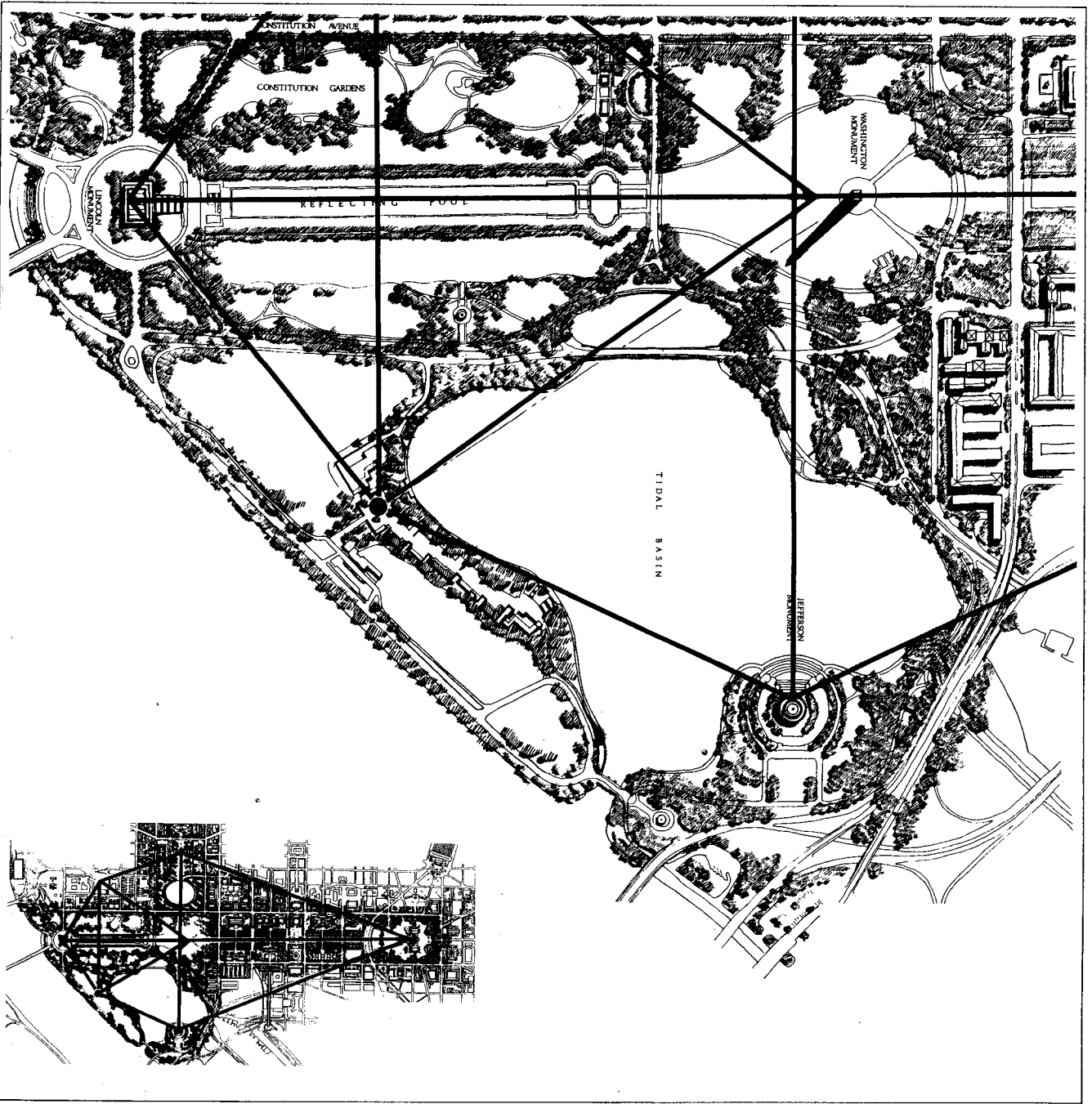
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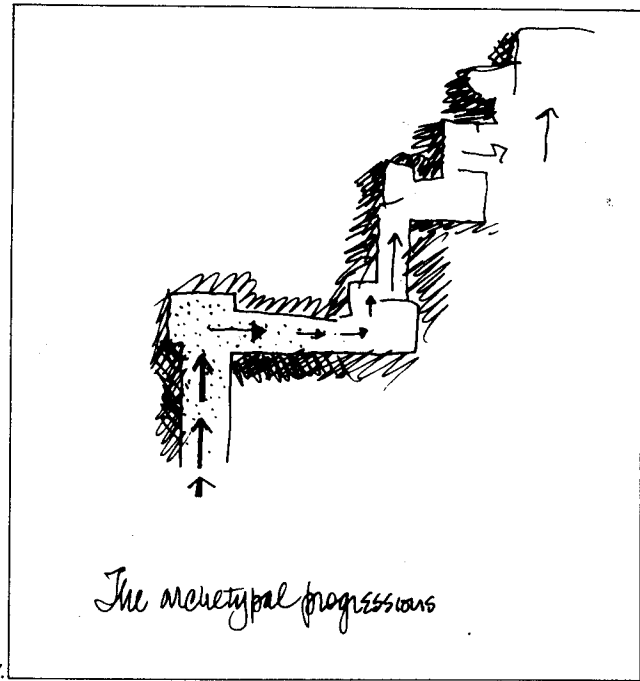
15. The McMillan Kite Plan establishing the geometry of  
monumental Washington. 16. The Washington, Lincoln, and

Jefferson Memorials in place. The red dot locates the reserved site  
for the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial.

17, 18. Two sketches by Lawrence Halprin demonstrating the concept of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial derived from an archetypal progression.

2. The site itself exerted a profound influence on the design of the Memorial in subtle and overt ways. Among the subtle influences, although not the least demanding, was the magnificence of its location and physical beauty. The canopy of elms and the cherry trees dictated that the design gently accept and preserve the cherry trees and all the healthy elms, and incorporate them integrally within the body of the Memorial. The splendid views into and out of the site, especially those across the Tidal Basin to the Washington and Jefferson Monuments and across the meadow to the Lincoln Memorial, helped shape and dispose the physical spaces of the Memorial, as did the necessity of preserving the existing recreational facilities. It should be noted that the design so respects the site that from the Potomac side of the peninsula, the Memorial itself cannot be seen, appearing only to be a gently sloping grassy knoll beneath a canopy of trees.

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3. The third major influence upon the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial comes from Lawrence Halprin's experience and study of other great monuments and significant processional environments from the past and from other cultures. These memorial expressions cross cultural boundaries and span thousands of years. These environments share certain qualities, one of which is of particular significance: they were processional, that is, the participant experienced the memorial over time and distance by moving through a series of interrelated spaces before arriving at the final spatial event. The spaces through which the participant moved were cumulative. The entire experience was one of accumulating the sense of each separate though supporting and inter-related space (imbued with its own particular significance), which added up to the total environment and the experience of that environment. Edmund Bacon has written:

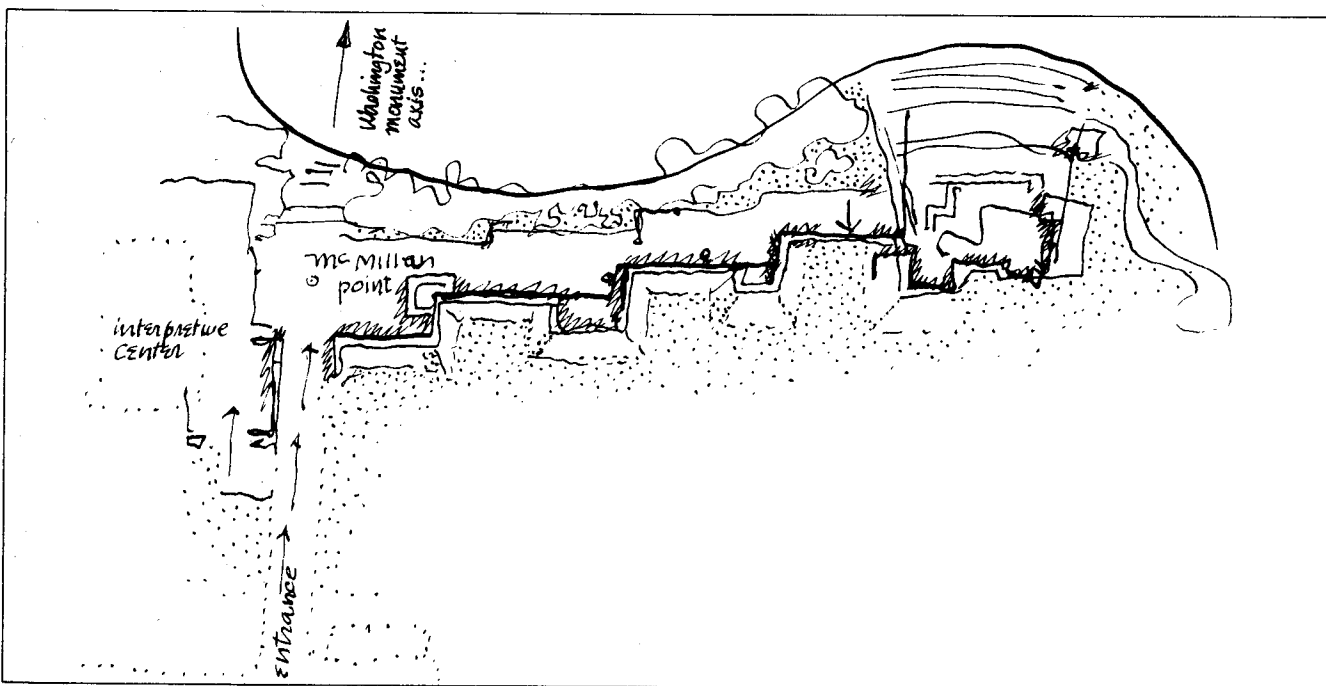
"The purpose of a design is to affect the people who use it, and in an architectural composition this effect is continuous, unbroken flow of impressions that assault their senses as they move through it. For a design to be a work of art, the impressions it produces in the participant must be not only continuous, but harmonious at every instant and from every viewpoint. It is the failure of the architect

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to project himself into the mind and spirit of the people who are to experience his designs that causes much of the staccato feeling to be noted in work today.

"In order to emphasize this point I use the word "participator" to designate the person who so senses the flow of messages that are transmitted by a design. The changing visual picture is only the beginning of the sensory experience; the changes from light to shade, from hot to cold, from noise to silence, the flow of smells associated with spaces, and the tactile quality of the surface underfoot, all are important in the cumulative effect.

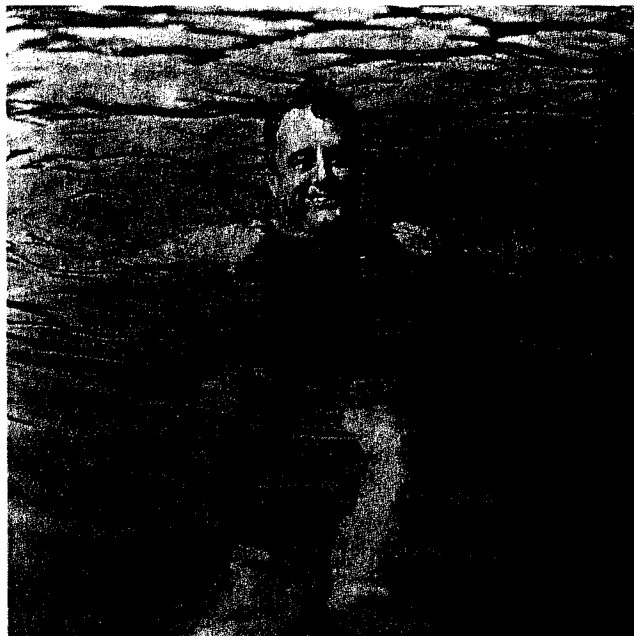
"Underlying it all is the modular rhythm of footsteps, the unchanging measure of space since earliest civilization. There is the muscular effort to cross a court, for instance, or the exhilaration induced by the prospect of ascending or descending a stairway."<sup>12</sup>

The least tangible quality, though perhaps most important, was that each of the historically profound memorials was a place where people remained over periods of time and to which they returned in order to feel the special magic of the place. Those places were metaphors for the journey of life with its challenges, defeats and victories,

significant spaces or events separated by contemplative passages or interludes occurring in space over time.

The participant experiences such places by passing through them along a consciously designed route over a period of time. For example, it takes time to climb the Acropolis along a route that controls views and movement through spaces in order to gain the sanctum of the Parthenon, or to proceed along the narrow streets and small plazas of Venice before entering the great space of Piazza San Marco.

The powerful use of processional space and time is the architectural instrument by which Franklin Delano Roosevelt's protean personality and the enormity of the events he confronted are embodied and symbolically represented.



19.

19. Roosevelt in pool at Warm Springs, Georgia.

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20. Presiden

4. Finally, Roosevelt's life itself influenced the design. His abiding love and active lifelong participation with gardening and forestry, sailing and the sea, as well as a deep commitment to the conservation of natural resources, determined to a large extent the palette of materials and the appropriateness of a landscape solution that has a gentle embracing relationship to the site and to its own components. The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial represents the Commission's best efforts, and the best efforts of pre-eminent historians, to synthesize the content of Roosevelt's extraordinary presidency and his complex, multi-faceted personality and determine what would be incorporated and embodied within the Memorial to shape its form.

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20. President and Mrs. Roosevelt at Warm Springs, 1934.



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21. Taking the presidential oath, first inaugural, 1933.



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22. Campaigning in Indianapolis, 1932.

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23. *Greeting a miner on the campaign train, 1932.*



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24. *Addressing a crowd on the campaign train, 1932.*

Franklin Delano Roosevelt created, to a large degree, the popularly perceived sense of his own involvement in his own time. By putting the stamp of his own enormous personal magnetism upon it, he *became* the time, subsuming that time within the contours of his charisma, compassion and humor. Roosevelt, a thoughtful and challenging leader, was also a complex and multi-faceted man. It became obvious to Lawrence Halprin and the Memorial Commission that the issue to engage directly was how properly to convey, now and in the future when there would no longer exist anybody with personal memory of the man, precisely that complexity, intelligence, compassion, wit, energy, and devotion to a people in need, and the multiplicity of issues and challenges both Roosevelt and the people of the nation faced during that time.



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26. *With a crowd on the campaign train, 1932.*



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24. Addressing the nation, 1940.



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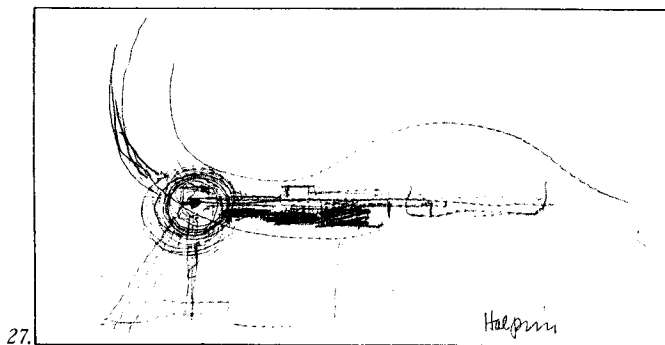
25. A typical jaunty mood.



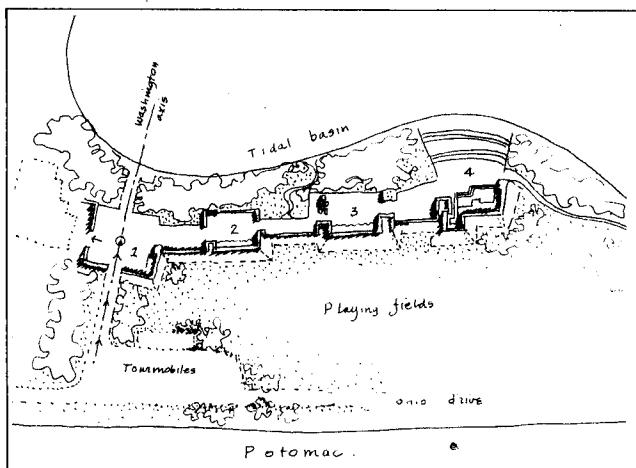
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26. With Churchill and Stalin at Yalta, 1945.

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27, 28. Lawrence Halprin's early concept sketches for the Memorial design.

The concept of the Memorial design therefore had to respond to the influences, echo the complexity of the man and his time, the positive engagement with the people and the quality of their lives, as well as respond to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Commission's charge. Such intricacies of President Roosevelt's personality and events of the time could clearly not be communicated by a single, immediately comprehended, physical environment or single image of President Roosevelt. The Memorial had to celebrate symbolically and actually the rich tapestry of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's life as president.

Thus it was determined that there would be multiple sculptural images of President Roosevelt and his times within the Memorial precinct. These figurative images would be created by several outstanding American sculptors. The Memorial will be but one of the many uses of the site, albeit the most structured and formal element. The recreational facilities which now attract many people to the site will be retained and rearranged, for example, in order to interact sympathetically with the Memorial itself. The long, landscaped berm that holds the Memorial in its embrace will also serve as a place from which people can watch activities on the meadow and the Potomac beyond.

The idea behind the multiple uses of the site is based upon notions of a relationship between "sacred" and "secular" spaces or ritualistic and non-ritualistic spaces. Ritualistic spaces contain activities reserved for special environments, places or precincts given to contemplation, serenity or the engagement of the inner self. Non-ritualistic spaces are places, such as the recreational area, reserved for physical activity and interaction between people. The relationship between these spaces is symbolic of the relationship that existed with the "geography" of Roosevelt himself: a statesman involved with the world of ideas and concepts of government in service to people as well as being a masterful politician, a man born to privilege but still of the people.

The Memorial and its site are seen finally as an enabling environment, not solely as a monument, but as a place to which people come and exercise choice of activity, recreation, contemplation, rest. It will be a recreational refuge for Washington's citizens, a park for the nation, and a living, changing place whose environmental amenities can be engaged actively by people rather than statically and reverentially observed. The area will exemplify the impact that Franklin Delano Roosevelt had on the nation in his time and the timeliness of that impact.

Thus the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is designed as a complete and contemplative experience, instead of a single isolated piece of iconography. It emphasizes the special qualities which only participation over time, space and distance can create. The Memorial's environmental qualities involve the experiences of the visitor and the evocation of the man and his times. They are not only visual. They are appropriate to our people, our culture, our democracy, and to President Roosevelt.



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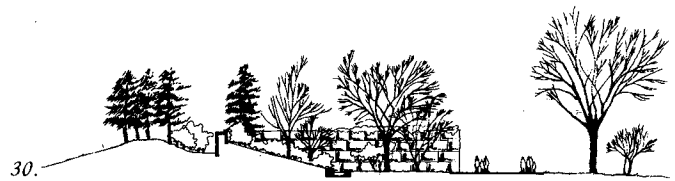
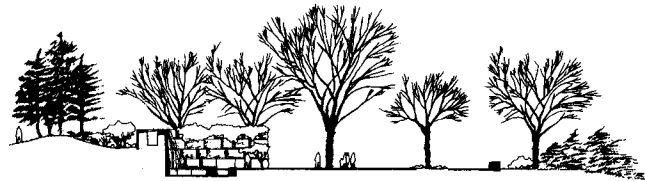
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## VI THE DESIGN ELEMENTS

The design elements of the Memorial had to be as enduring and reflective of the timelessness of the ideas embodied within the Memorial itself. Natural materials, stone, plants and water, each potentially having important symbolic or metaphoric relationships with Franklin Delano Roosevelt, were seen as appropriate and important.



30. Sections through the Memorial showing the granite wall. The upper section shows the condition where waterfalls and sculpture bas reliefs occur, the lower, sloping garden areas.

31. The agate granite quarry in the Dakota hills.

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## THE GRANITE WALL

Approximately midway between the Potomac and the Tidal Basin will be the single most important architectural element of the Memorial, a 1,000-foot long, rectilinearly meandering granite wall that will contain and define the outdoor rooms and contemplative passages on the Tidal Basin side of the site. This 14-foot high wall can be viewed as the "spine" of the Memorial, a great organizing element from which all the other elements will be generated and to which they will all be related. The water will issue from the wall and run splashing about its stones, the plantings will be contained by the spaces it will define, and the sculpture will be either directly affixed to the wall or in a direct relationship to it. The wall, thus, will be the integrator of the Memorial experience, as well as the constant element of the entire site, the measure of the space against which all the constituent elements will be scaled and the consistent design device which will establish the scale of the Memorial.

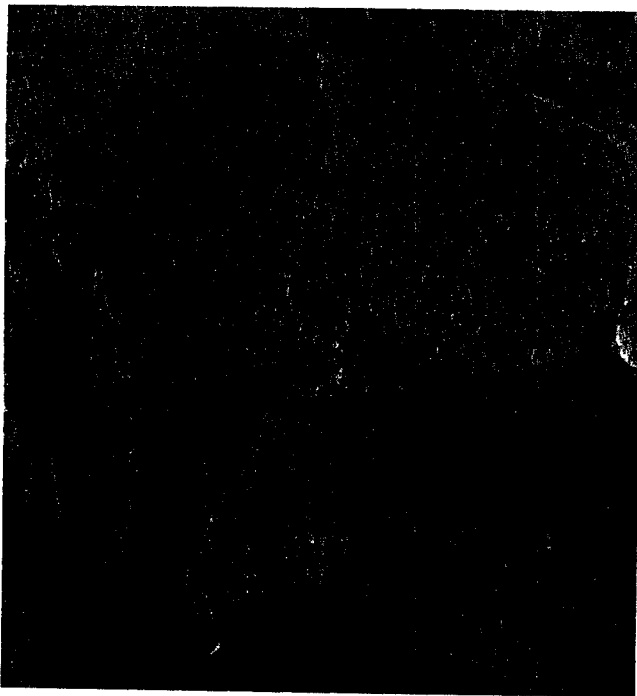
For the walls, granite was selected. An historically enduring stone, it is able to withstand the assaults of time and air pollution as well as changing its face in different weather and light conditions. Granite also maintains its essential characteristics over centuries of exposure to extreme climatic conditions. From a rock quarry in the Dakotas, a richly dappled, variegated red agate granite was chosen. Ranging from pinks to deep reddish brown, the stone exhibits a luxuriousness whether dry or wet, in sunlight, or under overcast skies, that is quite different from a grey granite. Grey granite is an austere material, homogenous in texture and color, the range of its color change is limited, in sunlight white, wet, dark grey, having none of the tapestry richness of the selected, evocatively warm stone. The stone will be basically laid in four coursings of  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet per course with the horizontal dimensions of each stone varying from six feet to well over 20 feet in length. The impact of the walls will be massive and powerful, evocative of the strength of this land.

The face of the stones of the wall will be left untreated. Where large inscriptions are used, the stones will be smoother, sawn faced blocks. The play of light over these contrasting, highly textured, multi-hued rock surfaces will be both visually and metaphorically rich, speaking directly about and to Franklin Delano Roosevelt's towering public strength and personal courage.



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32. *Split face, rough textured granite finish.*

33. *Wire sawn, smooth surfaced granite finish.*



## PLANTING

The design statement of the Memorial as a garden grows from a love and avocation central to Roosevelt's life. He was deeply and actively interested in forestry and reforestation, practicing the conservation he preached, on the grounds of the family home at Hyde Park. After the last term of his presidency he had intended to retire into a forestry growing practice, such was his commitment to the land.

In a passage from a speech devoted to the reconstruction of the land, he said, "The history of every nation is eventually written in the way in which it cares for its soil." "It is," he went on speaking of forests, "an integral part of our national land covering, and the most potent factor in maintaining nature's delicate balance in the organic and inorganic worlds." Clearly his voice was prophetic and his

concern real, and anticipated our more recent concern with conservation and ecology. President Roosevelt's interest in the natural environment did not stop with trees; he tended and maintained flowers and was an avid amateur ornithologist, keeping copious notes and records of birds seen at Hyde Park.

The existing elms of the Memorial site, magnificent specimens 60 to 70 feet high and spreading their crowns 50 to 60 feet in many instances, will all be retained, if not too old or subject to Dutch Elm disease. They will all be contrapuntally reinforced by the introduction of a variety of other trees for shade and some smaller trees, some flowering, some not. The gardens will be planted with various shrubs, flowers, ferns, grasses, ground coverings and vines, which contribute to the continuity of this visual floral feast. The Memorial then will be a major garden for the nation, not only appropriate to the site but also and more germane, true to Franklin Delano Roosevelt's life.

## SCULPTURE

The Memorial was conceived as a vast gentle sculptural landscape containing within the girdle of its granite walls a number of sculptural images and inscribed quotations. These low relief or full round sculptures and carved words will particularize those crucial events of Roosevelt's presidency and his time and certain of his attitudes, as well as carry the emotional charge and content of the message to the visitor. Since the sculpture will be both figurative and representational, they will be both readily accessible and understandable to the majority of visitors, such as Roosevelt himself was to the majority of the country. The sculpture and inscriptions will treat with the content of the Memorial in a sequential and anecdotal manner, starting with his first inaugural and ending with a depiction of the funeral cortege moving through the streets of Washington.

Roosevelt's subtleties and immediacies could only be captured by calling upon the talents of a group of artists, each of whom brings to his separate piece an individual view of the event of attitude depicted, the sum of which communicates as complete a picture of the man and his time as possible. The unique concept of this approach to public art shares with much of what is central to our nation, and with one of the nation's great renewable strengths, stylistic diversity within thematic unity.

In June of 1977, an extensive process was initiated to determine the very best of this nation's sculptors. Three conditions were applied: they had to be living in this country, they had to produce art which was figurative, and their work had to be of the highest artistic merit. Lawrence Halprin contacted a number of people who had distinguished knowledge of and were impeccably expert in the arts. They were asked whom in their judgment they would recommend as qualified for the task. Certain artists were recommended by many of the group while a few were recommended by all.

Twenty-two sculptors' names emerged in all and over a period of time, for a constellation of reasons, five names were selected for further consideration. Lawrence Halprin, after interviewing each of the considered sculptors, made his recommendation to the Memorial Commission. The Memorial Commission, after its own deliberations, selected Leonard Baskin, Neil Estern, Robert Graham, and George Segal, all sculptors of immense talent, sensitivity and reputation.

Because of the intended stylistic diversity of the sculptors and the agreed-upon thematic unity, it was determined that in order to further the unity of these various images, a common material—bronze—would be employed. An alloy of copper, tin, antimony, phosphorus or other components, bronze is one of the most enduring sculptural materials and has a special quality of historic suitability. The color of the material is capable of close control and is most harmonious with the reddish granite against which the sculpture would be seen.

In any collaboration, especially one as important and ambitious as this, a close and deep understanding of each of the participants' points of view is crucial as is building mutual respect. Each of the sculptors, knowing of the work of some of the others, had developed a degree of artistic respect for their mutual work. A vehicle was necessary for them all to explore together the potentials implied in such a collaboration and more importantly to meet face to face. The vehicle for this dynamic collaboration became two intensive sculptural design workshops, the first held in San Francisco in October 1977 and the second held in New Jersey in January 1978.

At these sessions the sculptors, and the designer of the Memorial intensely explored at length and in depth, over a period of days, their views of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the nature of public art, the significant relationships of their own work to each other and the major themes to be depicted and by whom. They spoke together, ate together, made drawings, argued, and slowly began to form a collective preliminary sculptural view of an iconographic response to the issue of Roosevelt's presidency within the spatial context of the Memorial as designed. These discussions and work sessions subtly and organically altered the shape of parts of the Memorial, and the result is an artistic collaboration unique in the history of our nation.

The Memorial will convey President Roosevelt's special presence by the interaction of these artists with the powerful and moving yet gentle garden of the Memorial precinct. It will invoke his qualities and interests through multiple words and images within a fluid series of spaces and convey the intricacies and diversities of problems met and the interests and attributes of leadership Roosevelt communicated to the nation.

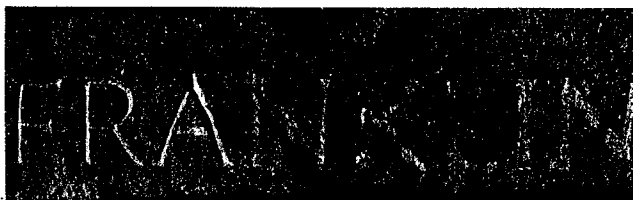
## INSCRIPTIONS

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a man of exceptional verbal skill. He was able to move people to perform beyond their strengths, to the limits of their courage, beyond their sense of self by the words he used, the quality of his voice, and the sincerity he conveyed so powerfully. His deep concern for the weak and underprivileged was made manifest to all citizens by his utterances and his precisely chosen words. He enjoined us to know that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself," that he was indeed a president who sincerely placed his "... faith once more in the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid," and that he would "... never forget that I live in a house owned by all the American people and that I have been given their trust."

His words therefore must be as central to the Memorial as any other element, carrying the critical intellectual content of the Memorial and communicating it to the visitor.

John Benson, nationally respected calligrapher and stone carver, was selected by the Memorial Commission for the important task of carving those moving words directly into the granite. The inscriptions will appear on the walls, and in certain paved areas on benches. They will in that sense be as pervasive and persuasive today as they were during Franklin Roosevelt's presidency.

The quotations will be carved in a Roman letter form called Trajan. No finer Roman capital letters are to be seen anywhere than those inscribed on a stone tablet on the pedestal of the great column erected by the Emperor Trajan in Rome about 113 A.D. The simple harmony of the lines and curves and the grace and taste of the fine proportions have caused them to serve as models for more than 1,800 years. It is entirely fitting that these timeless letters be used on the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial.



36.

# JO ROOSEVELT MEMORIAL



37.

## WATER

As a celebration of all aspects of Roosevelt's life, water play is one of the dominant design elements of the Memorial. Many of the popular images of Roosevelt's time showed him engaged in water-related activities. As Secretary of the Navy, swimming at Warm Springs, Georgia, or sailing at Campobello, he was intimately connected in the popular consciousness with water and the sea. He once said after his polio attack, "The water put me where I am and the water has to put me back." The Memorial responds to this facet of President Roosevelt's life.

Water, in various states of activity, threads its way continuously the length of the memorial. In still pools, flowing through runnels, cascading over the granite, glimmering in sheets or splashing vigorously among stones, the use of water in the Memorial functions as does a dominant theme in a novel, linking together characters and events.

The sound of the water will mask the noise of air traffic which overflies the site on approach to National Airport. Other than that functional reasons, the obvious connections with Franklin Delano Roosevelt's life, and experientially desired design reasons, water play serves another real function; it provides the sound of the Memorial. There are a number of visual devices and design elements which establish the Memorial's continuity. Reinforcing and augmenting those, the many sounds of water provide aural continuity and create a "sound space" and reference as does the sound of a stream heard when walking in the woods.

## LIGHTING

The Memorial serves two environmental pedestrian needs: it achieves the lighting of the site.

The southern dramatic lighting source wall and inscription many of illuminations.

The courtyard from below of enclosure summer, winter. The monument, its courses.

Places or the room the light works are treated so the illumination length of



## LIGHTING

The Memorial will be accessible at night. The lighting will serve two functions: the illumination of objects and environmental elements, and the general illumination of the pedestrian pathway. The lighting of the Memorial will be achieved without the use of distracting poles or fixtures; all the lighting will originate from indirect sources.

The southern side of the Memorial will be a carefully and dramatically lighted experience, using concealed fiber optics sources; the light will call attention to characteristic wall and water events as well as the sculptural pieces and inscriptions. In addition the planting behind and below many of the stone walls will gleam, lit at low levels of illumination.

The course of the trees through the Memorial will be lit from below, creating a vault of light which carries a sense of enclosure from room to room, a green tapestry in the summer, and a lacy network of branches during the winter. The water will also be lit to emphasize the movement, surface reflections and shimmering ripples as it courses the length of the Memorial.

Places or points of interest, such as the gateways between the rooms, will be emphasized by varying the intensity of the light levels. Thus the lighting, as the planting, water works and spaces themselves, will be a carefully orchestrated sequence of light experiences, the major one being the illuminated water, shimmering in the night the entire length of the Memorial.



38.

## OTHER FACTORS

The entire Memorial will be accessible to all visitors. Ramps will allow the handicapped and infirm to go through the whole experience on crutches or in wheelchairs. The need for elderly people to rest, for the very young to be active, for people to avail themselves of rest rooms and drinking fountains will be important considerations. Benches or seating places will occur throughout the Memorial; not benches in the familiar sense, they will be fashioned from slabs of the same granite as the walls. Some will be large and some stones will seat only one person. Some of these seating stones will have inscriptions carved on their sides so that the visitor can have a surprisingly close relationship to the words, tracing the letters by touch. These inscriptions will also be in scale with and at a height more readily read by children.

Changes in level, by steps and ramps, will provide an opportunity to experience changes in viewpoint as one progresses through the Memorial, encouraging the visitor to engage the Memorial in an active physical sense, climbing, descending or feeling the water.

While the Memorial experience will be one of dignity, it will not be a museum, awing the visitor into hushed reverence. Those who come to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial will have the opportunity to participate with the Memorial to whatever extent they choose, as President Roosevelt himself encouraged the people of this nation to participate in its destiny, insuring its availability at night as well as by day.

## VII THE FUNCTIONAL ELEMENTS

This following section dealing with the functional elements of the Memorial presents highlights of a more precise and larger report. An environmental impact statement prepared by the National Capitol Region, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, covers all the technical information in great detail and is available (as a companion piece to this report) through the National Park Service.

### LAND FORM, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

West Potomac Park resulted from the placing of dredge material taken from the Potomac by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers in the last decade of the 19th century. The dredging took place during efforts to clear channels in the river and fill material was placed on a bar that had existed at least since 1791, as Jefferson indicated on his plan for Washington.

Field exploration for the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial was begun in 1976 and consisted of the drilling and logging of test borings varying in depth from 20 to 83.4 feet below existing grade. The field explorations yielded geologic data that indicated a deposit of fill from 5 to 7.5 feet in thickness, which overlies generally soft to firm silty clay and layers of fine sand and occasional organic and wood fragments. It appears that the fine sands and silts below the fill may be the old hydraulic fill placed around 1900. The total depth of fill and natural soils was 80 to 90 feet where bedrock was encountered.

Ground water is generally encountered between 5.5 and 9.5 feet below existing grade. It is probable that the ground water is affected somewhat by the tidal changes. Tidal range in Washington Harbor is approximately three feet.

Since its creation, West Potomac Park has been subject to flooding and despite continuing efforts to raise and stabilize the seawall, especially in the period 1900-1915, the site is still periodically inundated.

Design flood level is set at elevation 16.5 corresponding to the 100-year flood level. Since all of the site is below this elevation, major flooding is conceivable although occurring historically only in the lower sections (below elevation 10) along the Potomac and Tidal Basin peripheries, which is below the level of the Memorial. The interpretive center and its facilities are placed at the 16-foot elevation above the 100-year flood level.

The foundations for the memorial granite walls, the interpretive center and certain paved areas will consist of a concrete slab on pile caps over piles. Due to the nature of the soils, the piles, about 100 of them, will be driven some 80 to 90 feet to bedrock.

For the lighter and lower walls, shallow rigid mat foundations will be utilized, in some instances, the removal and recompaction of surficial soils above the water table may be necessary.

### CIRCULATION AND PARKING

The National Park Service estimates that the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial will attract two to three million people to the site each year. The majority will arrive at the Memorial by tourmobile or tourbus, but some will drive their own cars and seek parking at the site, while others will walk from other sections of the Mall. Access and parking will be provided to accommodate these numbers of visitors, as well as serving the recreational fields.

Automobile traffic would obviously be incompatible with the quiet, contemplative nature of the Memorial. Traffic has therefore been removed to Ohio Drive along one edge of the site, providing easy access to the Memorial and recreational facilities and at the same time being completely screened from view and sound within the Memorial itself.

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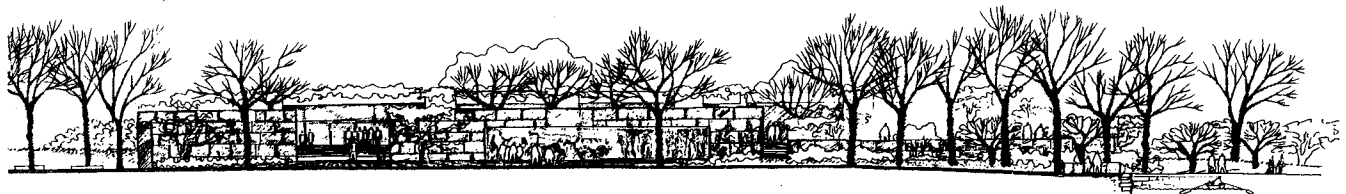
This entails the removal of almost all of West Basin Drive and redesigning Ohio Drive so it will have one lane of moving traffic in each direction and two parking lanes capable of accommodating several hundred cars. Additional parking is also provided at a location across the Inlet Bridge.

The National Park Service has been developing a complete and integrated visitors transportation system based upon the use of tourmobiles. It is planned that this system will help avoid tourist congestion and traffic jams throughout the Mall area of monumental Washington. The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial will link to this system by providing a separate tourmobile lane and a sheltered drop-off point, and further will accommodate tourbuses as well as private cars.

### RECREATIONAL AREAS

Because of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's love of sports the recreational fields are viewed as an important part of the Memorial concept. As the "secular spaces" they become an integral part of Memorial Park itself. Most of the fields will be retained and improved; those that are removed because of the entry to the Memorial will be relocated to the Folklife Festival site. The criteria for the new distribution were supplied by the Washington, D. C., Department of Recreation and by staff of the National Capital Region of the National Park Service. With the addition of some new facilities, Washingtonians will continue to possess and enjoy an augmented recreational amenity close to the heart of monumental Washington.

39. Elevation through entrance walk. Interpretive center behind granite wall.



ENTRANCE  
WALK

ENTRANCE TO  
INTERPRETIVE CENTER

SCULPTURE  
WALL

RESTAURANT  
TERRACE

CHERRY  
WALK

TIDAL  
BASIN

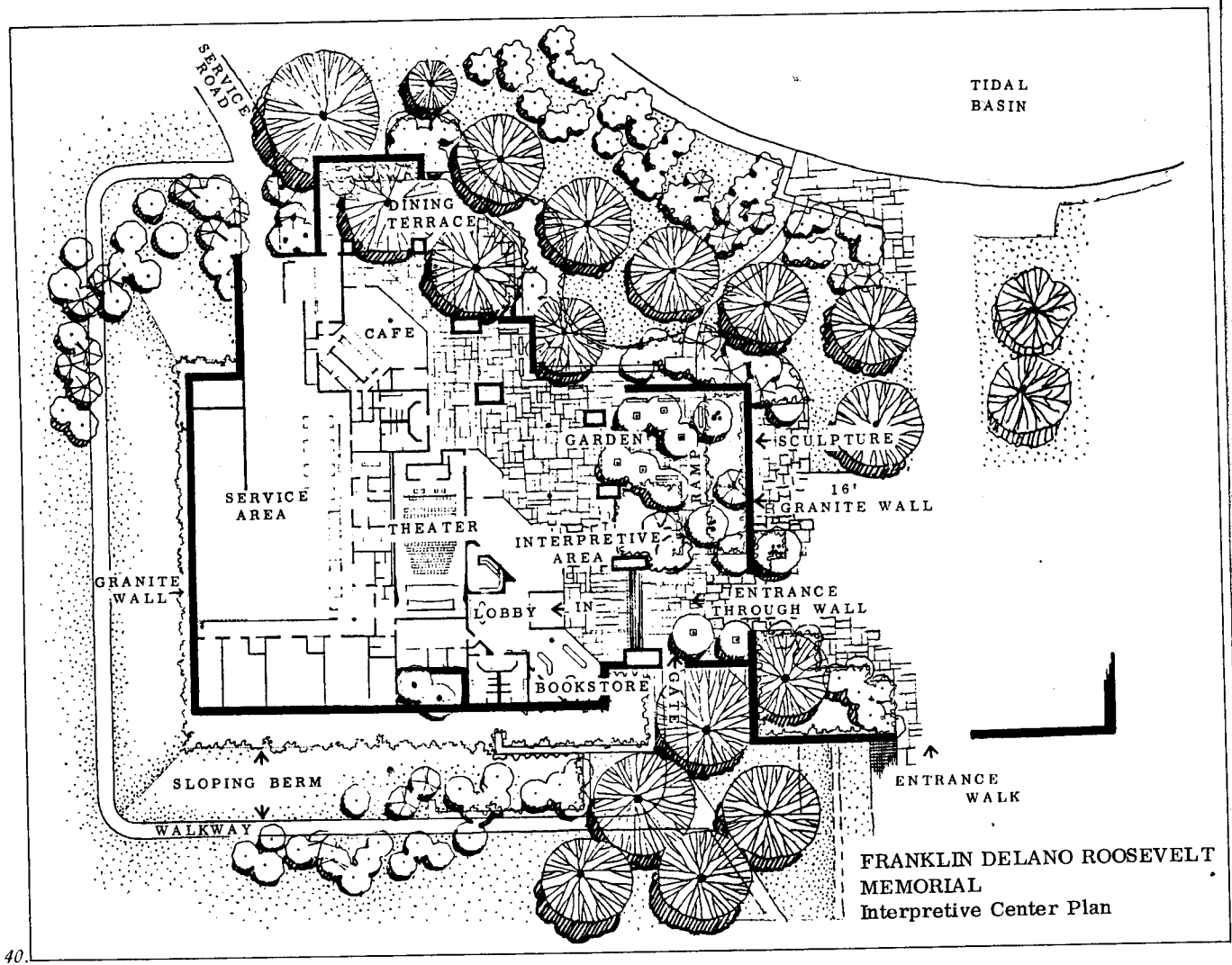
### INTERPRETIVE CENTER

The interpretive center will be surrounded by a 16-foot high granite wall and grassy berms. It will provide central visitor services for the memorial, and consist of most of the interior elements that serve the public. It will contain a staffed information bookstore. Adjacent to the lobby will be the media area, housing an "audio" room for 18 to 20 persons, a small movie theater that will seat approximately 200, and a small visual interpretive center. A small restaurant with a large enclosed garden space, and additional public toilets to serve both the restaurant and movie theater will complete the public facilities.

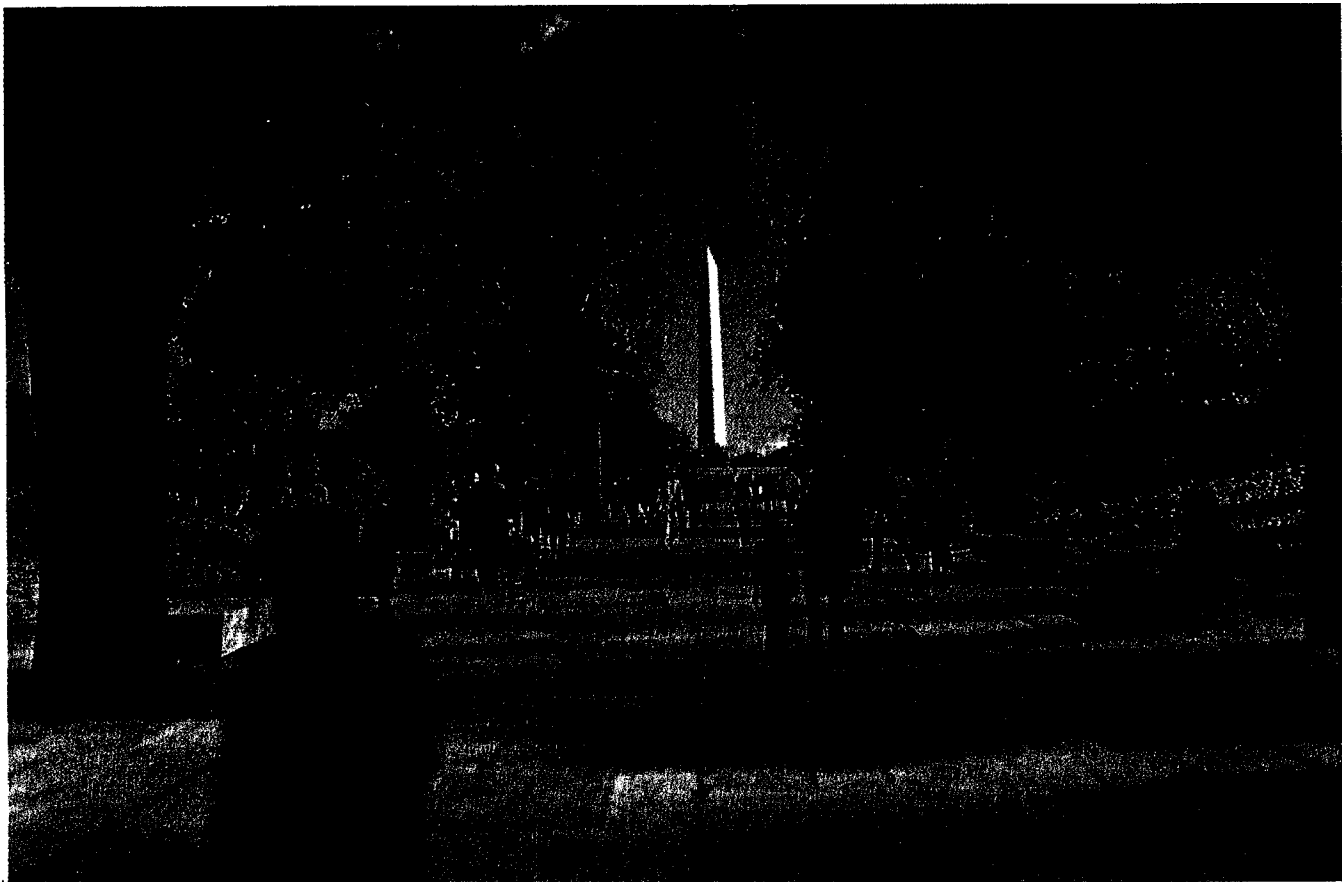
The interpretive center will also house various staff and service functions. Adjacent to the staff area will be the housekeeping facility, from which janitorial services will be provided to both the public and staff spaces in the interpretive center.

Service functions will include spaces for grounds and maintenance personnel and facilities, such as storage, lockers, maintenance shop, toilets and showers. Additional service functions will include a central mechanical room for the Memorial, a kitchen related to the restaurant and covered outdoor space for storage of small, electric vehicles which will be used for a variety of purposes at the Memorial, from trash collection to transporting grounds crews and equipment.

The interpretive center will be a U-shaped facility, built around a central service court which will provide loading and unloading space, and accommodate trucks up to 35 feet in length. Linked to a service drive, the court will also provide four parking spaces for handicapped staff members, and may be considered the service entrance to the entire Memorial.



40. Plan of the Interpretive Center and its gardens.



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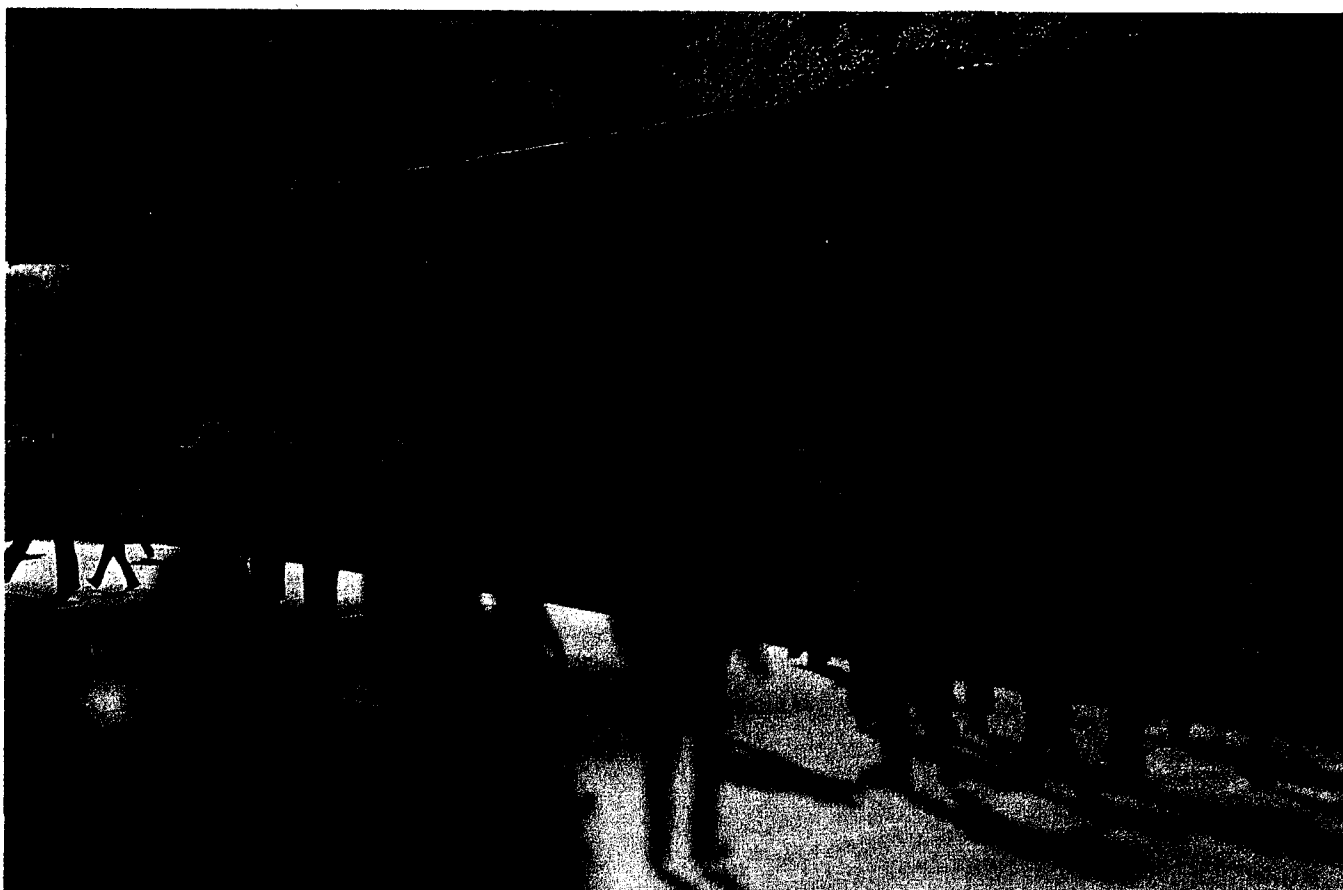
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Arriving at the Memorial, visitors will find themselves at an entrance plaza on the Potomac side of the site. The Memorial itself will not yet be apparent, the major view being the Lincoln Memorial seen across the meadow and the broad Potomac flowing on the other side of Ohio Drive. The Memorial's presence will be first established by a modest, sheltering, vine-covered structure at which visitors, departing the tourmobiles, can be oriented before proceeding into the Memorial park. Importantly, and most appropriately, located here will be facilities for the disabled and infirm so that those in need can obtain wheelchairs, guides and other aids that will allow them to fully enjoy and experience their visit.

Leaving the entrance plaza, visitors will enter the 250-foot long processional corridor contained on each side by six to eight-foot high earth berms. Here, under a canopy of trees, as they stroll across the peninsula, the geometry, the drama and the story of the Memorial will begin to reveal themselves subtly. In the distance, across the Tidal Basin, the contained axial view of the Washington Monument will accent the introduction to the Memorial. The terminus of the walk, through a gate, will be the "lobby" of the Memorial. Once through the gate the visitor will be inside the Memorial precinct itself. The arrival lobby will be a large welcoming plaza from which the Memorial's sequence of events will unfold. The arrival

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plaza will be located on one of the major junctures of the McMillan plan, long designated as the location of a special commemorative function. It is entirely proper that the arrival plaza mark that location.

This great outdoor garden room, with the Washington Monument in the distance, will give out onto the Tidal Basin through the screen of trees lining the Cherry Walk. It is so designed that the visitor, hearing the sound of fountains, will feel a spatial tug to the right, where the entire length of the Memorial will reveal itself partially and intriguingly through and under a canopy of elms. One thousand feet long, the Memorial will be a series of out-

door spaces, contained on two or three sides by heavily rusticated granite walls. The spaces, open always to the Tidal Basin, will be four great garden "rooms" linked by passageway gardens, richly planted with roses, azaleas, flowering trees, and a variety of plantings played against the sound and leap of the everpresent water. The walking surfaces of these 30 to 60-foot wide passages, as well as the rooms, will be paved with the same granite as the walls, the visual effect softened by grass often growing in the joints of the stones. The great reddish granite walls and the rush of water sounds, defining the space of the Memorial both physically and audially, will now be seen and heard fully for the first time.

Immediately to the right, on the wall and cast in bronze, will be seen the Great Seal of his presidency adjacent to the words "The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial" carved into the granite. Beyond, on a further wall, at a right angle to the introductory inscription will be a life-size, bronze, low relief of President Roosevelt, depicting him at his first inaugural. The sculptural relief will be accompanied by a single significant inscription carved into the stone: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

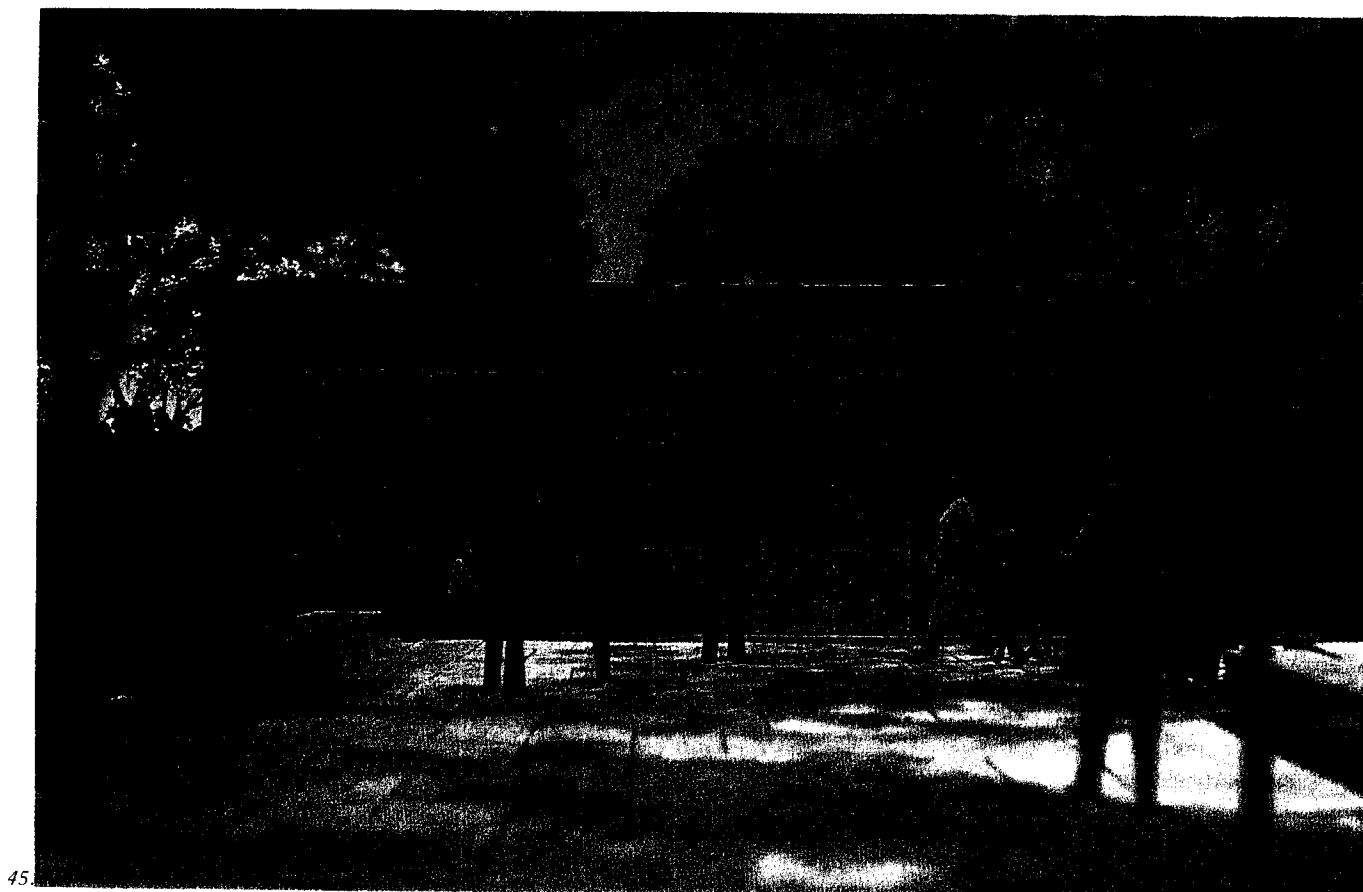
Adjacent to the inaugural image, around a corner of the wall though still within the arrival plaza, will be a series of portrait plaques depicting the President with different people: miners, farmers, a factory worker, along with suitable quotations by the President carved into the stone, conveying the special and caring relationship that he had with the people he was elected to serve. The arrival plaza or first garden room, with its images and carved inscriptions, will serve as an introduction to the remarkable events of Franklin Roosevelt's presidency and his responses to those events, as well as introducing the visitor to Franklin Roosevelt the man linked to the people, inspiring them to rise above the dangers and difficulties of the times.

From the arrival plaza a transition will be made to the first of three quiet passages separating the four great outdoor garden rooms. These richly landscaped passages will contain moving inscriptions and incidental sculptural events, and will serve as places where visitors can sit and dwell upon that which they have experienced and anticipate that which lies ahead. These will be places of contemplation, spaces where the linear quality of the wall, water and plantings will interact and lead the visitor on to the next experience.

At the end of this first contemplative passage the visitor will be introduced to the profoundly tragic and painful circumstances of the Great Depression. On a wall at a right angle to the main linear garden wall, forming a gate between the passage and the second room, will be two major sculptural compositions in full round, portraying the poverty and misery which afflicted both urban centers and rural areas. One composition will depict the breadlines and unemployed, so familiar a scene in cities throughout the nation. The other will depict the dispossessed, a man and woman, farmers, weighted by those events that visited our rural areas, loss of land and home, the Dust Bowl,

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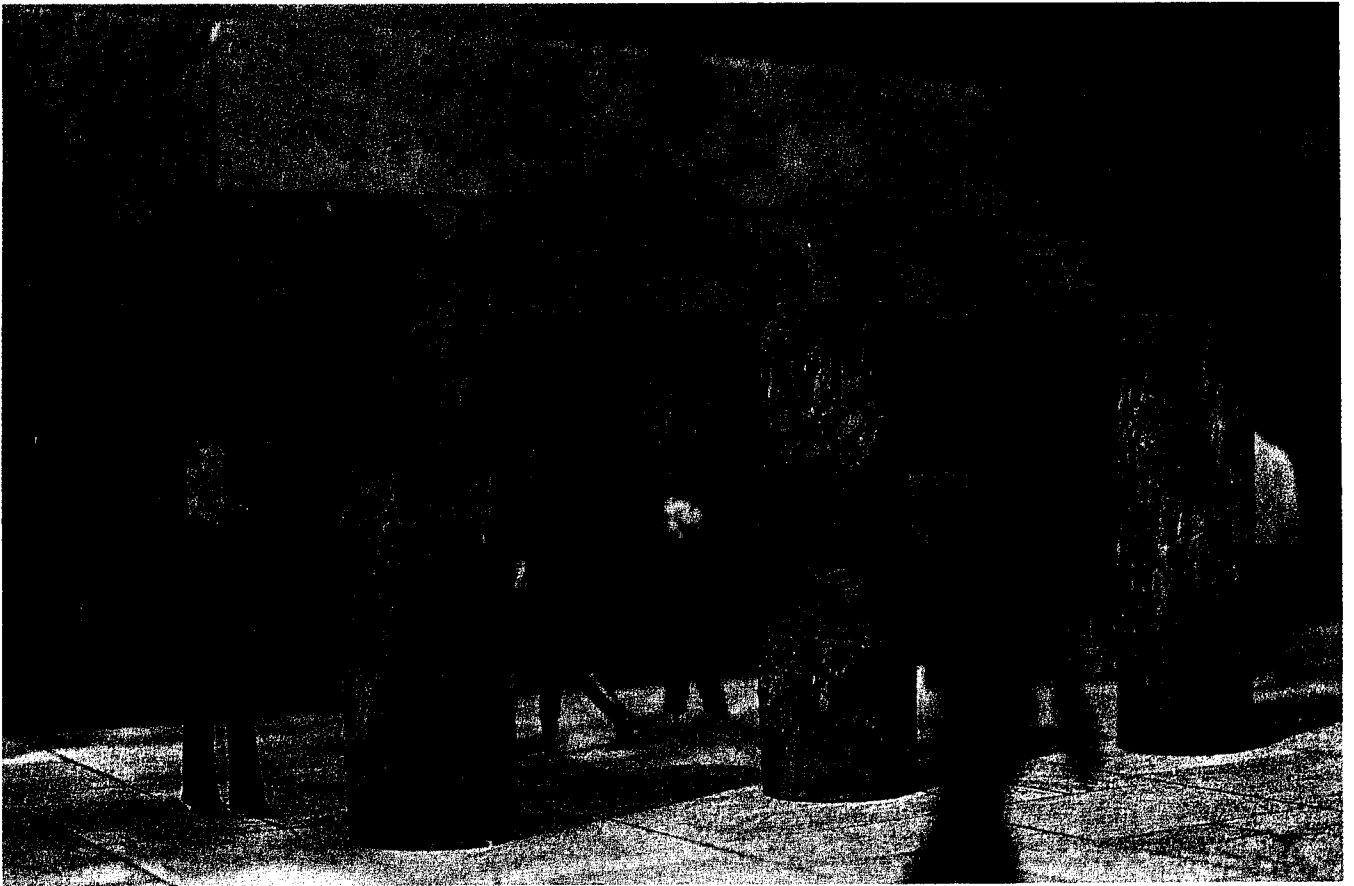




human hunger and deprivation: the first great challenge President Roosevelt confronted, further articulated through his vibrant statement, "I see one-third of a nation ill housed, ill clad, ill nourished. . . ."

Passing through the gate the visitor will enter the second outdoor room and experience not only a spatial change but also the sculptural evocation of the Roosevelt administration's response to the great Depression. On the right, in full round, will be another composition, a man and a woman in a room listening intently to a radio. President Roosevelt spoke directly and more importantly listened intently to the people. His Fireside Chats evoked hope





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and promise from a dispirited people and instilled a confidence in both the presidency and in themselves.

To the left, on the other side of the Depression wall will be another arrangement, a large relief affixed to the wall, in front of which will be five sculptured cylinders, symbolizing and depicting the innovative New Deal legislation which established programs that began to cope with the massive problems of poverty, hunger and a despoiled land. Here the visitor will read in words and images of the TVA, the CCC, the NRA, and the AAA. In order that the information conveyed be made more available to visitors without sight, many of the words and messages, here and

elsewhere in the Memorial, will be cast in Braille. Also within this room, on the main linear wall will be a large low relief treating with the reconstruction of the land and the conservation of our natural resources, deep and lifelong concerns of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The theme of this room will be the cascade of legislation by which Franklin Roosevelt uniquely and creatively put government in service of human dignity and the attempt to heal human suffering.

Traversing the remainder of the Memorial, the visitor will experience the remaining and surely most painful years of President Roosevelt's life, the years of the battle to preserve and maintain an entire world's right to freedom and dignity. The visitor will be confronted at the end of this passage with the apocalyptic horror that dictatorships visited upon the world. Here a freestanding wall perpendicular to the path of travel will have been shattered; an enormous ruin of stone and sculpture will capture the quality of the carnage loosed by the engines of enslavement. This enormous collaborative effort will contain moving and powerful sculptural images, a huddled group of people in a concentration camp, a cluster of bodies half hidden in the rubble, and a huge clenched hand. The entire composition, roughly central to the Memorial as well as Franklin Roosevelt's presidency, will graphically depict to the visitor his greatest test as president.

Beyond this enormous sculptural gesture, on the right again, will be seen the sculptural interpretation of the response of the nation as "the arsenal of democracy." The nation committed itself under President Roosevelt's leadership to wage total and unconditional war in order to preserve the fundamental principles of human dignity that Roosevelt believed in, whether nationally or internationally, "Freedom from Want, Freedom from Fear, Freedom of Worship and Freedom of Speech." These words, cast in bronze, will be affixed to the wall, reminding the visitor of the common denominator of a people at liberty and what were at root the basic reasons for which World War II was fought.

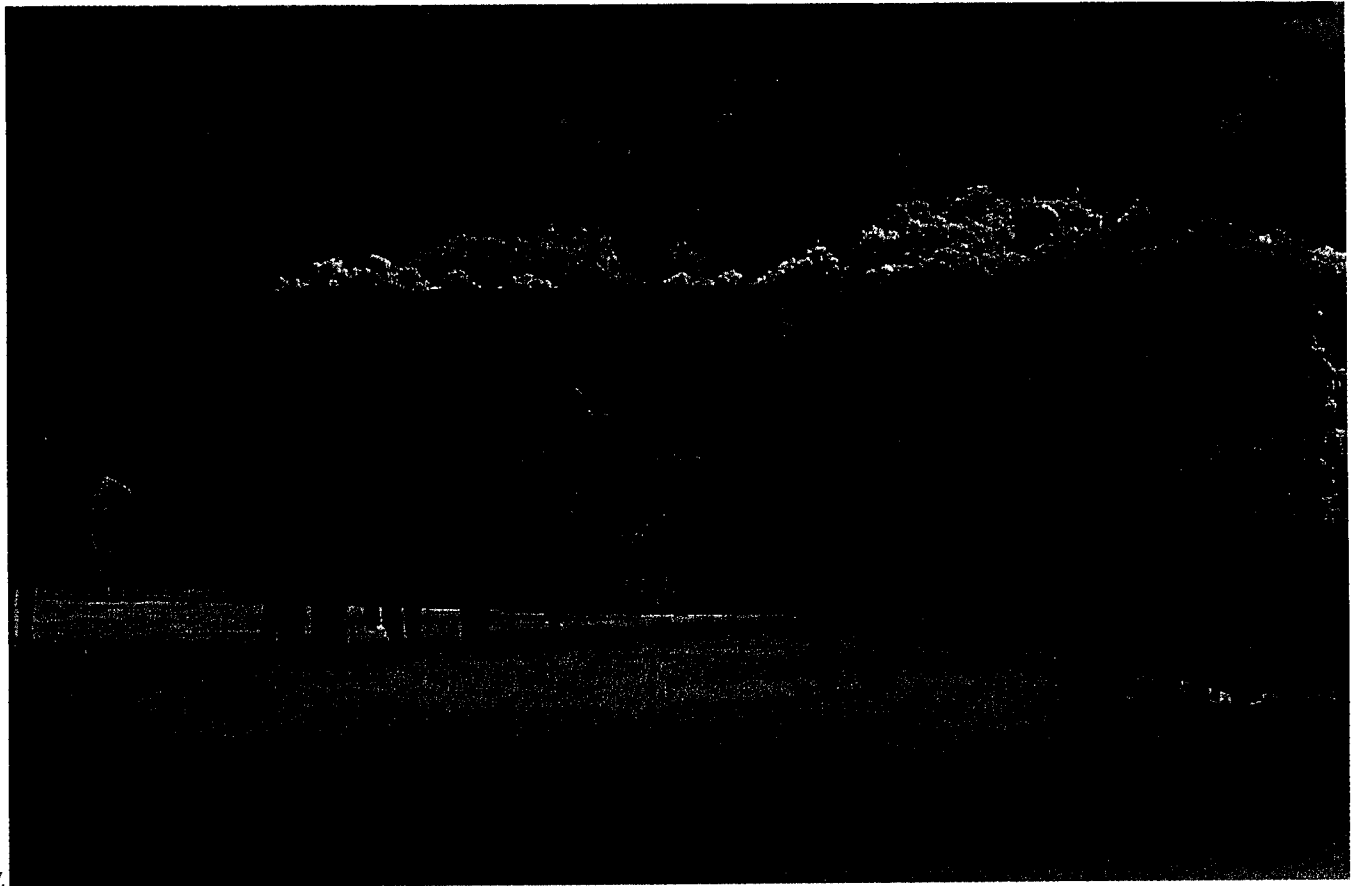
The experience of this space will be terminated by a sculptural depiction of Roosevelt with his colleagues at Yalta looking weary, intent, weighted by the overwhelming range and depth of problems faced by this great president at a critical moment in history when the strategy for world peace was being formulated.

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As visitors leave this room for the final quiet passage, they will see ahead of them in the final room a large relief affixed to the wall and terminating the Memorial: a great portrait of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Commander in Chief, on the bridge of a naval vessel, the image of him so familiar to so many people.

This final room will be the cumulative event of the Memorial walk, a dynamic water garden with its source in the granite wall. This water garden will extend from the wall to the Cherry Walk and Tidal Basin.

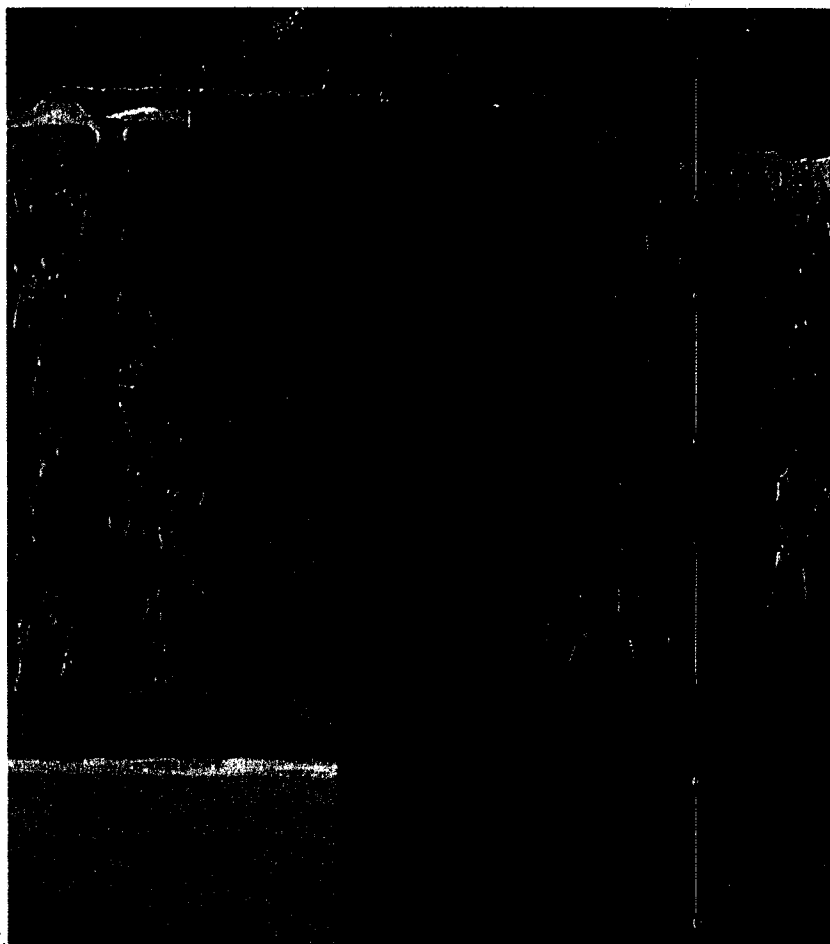
As the natural element most frequently identified with President Roosevelt, sailing at Campobello, career as Secretary of the Navy, mid-Atlantic wartime meetings, swimming in the therapeutic waters of Warm Springs, water will be the leit-motif of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial.

The water will be used in many ways, in rivulets, sheets, pools, torrents and cascades. There will be places where the visitor can walk over it on terraces or platforms or sit quietly beside it. The timeless qualities of water, granite and trees in this garden will recall the timeless nature of Roosevelt's service to the American people.

The walk will then extend on past the water garden, continuing on towards a symbolic gate leading to a location where people can linger and observe the only view of the Capitol from the site. This "gate" will act as the entrance to the Memorial for people approaching on foot from the Jefferson Memorial. In contrast to much of the rest of the Memorial, this area will be much less structured, consisting primarily of a meandering path threading through low berms and tree plantings in a park-like setting.

The visitor who has completed a stroll through the Memorial will have the option of continuing towards the Jefferson Memorial on foot, or turning back and walking along

48.



the Cherry Walk at water's edge to the arrival plaza. Here people will observe, affixed to a 16-foot high wall, a 60-foot long dramatic low relief elegiac sculpture on the death of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, his bier on a caisson being pulled by horses while people view the procession in shock and grief.

Behind this sculptured panel, entered through a "gate" in the wall, will be the low-lying, unobtrusive, interpretive center beneath a sod covered roof. The interpretive center will be an integral and important adjunct to the Memorial, enabling those who have a varied and deeper interest in the life and times of President Roosevelt to round out their experience through a variety of audio-visual offerings.

Adjacent to a staffed information and waiting area which the visitor first enters will be those public areas which form the core of the center: a bookstore, 200-seat theatre, listening room, and a small museum. A three-part audio-visual presentation will augment an understanding of the Memorial experience by providing a more personal and documentary view of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Available for viewing in a 200-seat theatre will be films and newsreels of the man and his time taken in his time. The second part of the presentation will consist of an area where photographs and personal artifacts of the president will be displayed in a small museum.

The last part of the presentation and perhaps symbolically the most appropriate, will be rooms in which small groups of visitors can listen to Roosevelt's voice: a voice which, in his Fireside Chats, communicated so much so evocatively and penetrated so profoundly into the lives and homes of all Americans. It was his voice as well as his image that became so significant a part of the iconography of American history. Thus through film, voice, photographs and artifacts, the visitor will receive a brief, rich biographical sketch of the man, enriching the entire Memorial experience.

Off a partially enclosed terraced garden area, visitors will be able to avail themselves of the amenity of a small restaurant. Here seated in the dappled light of the tree canopy and enjoying a modest selection of foods, visitors will be able to rest and appreciate the views across the Tidal Basin of the Jefferson Memorial and the city of Washington.



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